















**THE  
P R O B L E M  
OF  
HINDUSTANI**

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## PREFACE

This brochure contains addresses and articles in which I have discussed the problem of a common language for India. They were published from time to time in different journals, but have now been collected together in order to draw attention to the different aspects of a problem of national importance and as a contribution towards its solution. India is in search of a *lingua franca*, a language which will serve as a means of inter-provincial and inter-regional intercourse, which will be used for all-India purposes in place of English. This language will not come into competition with any of the great provincial languages of India and will in no way retard their growth and development. It may not be forced on any one, but it will be learnt by all those who desire to participate in inter-provincial affairs—political, social and economic.

As the *lingua franca* of India must necessarily be one of the languages spoken in India, it will serve a twofold object—as a

medium of all-India inter-communication and as a medium of regional education and social intercourse. In its second capacity the language must become the vehicle of science and literature, the means for the highest expression of mind.

Among the Indian languages one seems by common consent to stand out as the most suitable for the purpose—namely the speech of the Madhya Desha, the region round Delhi. Unfortunately this speech has developed two literary styles; one is known as Urdu and the other Modern Hindi.

My aim in the addresses and articles collected here is to show how the differences between the two can be eliminated and a middle way laid out along which the writers of both styles can march together.

I have devoted my attention entirely to the problem of language. I am aware that some people regard the linguistic question to be intimately connected with the question of script. I do not think so. In my opinion the Urdu and Nagari scripts ought both to be used and therefore learnt by every educated person. Nor is it a very exacting demand. For after all scripts consist of a limited number of symbols which every body can learn without great strain upon time or energy.

I must also make it clear that while I advocate the adoption of Hindustani as the *lingua franca* of India, I have no ill will against Hindi or Urdu. I consider it a matter for great pity that Hindi and Urdu are fast becoming communal languages, on account of their exclusive policies. In this matter they are sinning against the civic ideal of a common Indian nation. Besides they are committing a grievous error in overloading the language with words containing alien sounds, and in subordinating it to alien rules of grammar. This is an expression of slave mentality in the field of language. It shows want of understanding of the genius of our own tongue and a woeful lack of pride in it.

I desire strongly that Hindustani should become the *lingua franca* of India, but this does not mean that we should forthwith cease to learn English. English is a world language and India has to play its part in world affairs. As a language which is most widely known on our earth, and as a repository of one of the greatest literatures of mankind, English ought to continue to be learnt in India.

Thus for every educated Indian it will be necessary to know his own regional language which will be the medium of his education,

Hindustani which will be the all-India language of inter-regional communication, and English which will admit him to the world communion of intellect.

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*P. V. Sita Rama*  
20/2/

**THE PROBLEM OF A COMMON  
LANGUAGE FOR INDIA**





The problem of a *lingua franca* for India is one of fundamental importance for the building up of the Indian nation. Unfortunately like all other national problems this also has got stuck in the mire of communal politics and very little advance can really be made towards its solution so long as the communal question remains unsolved. There is no reason, however, why we should not begin to think seriously about its various aspects and come to some understanding about the difficulties which stand in the way and how they can be overcome. During recent years the problem has received increasing attention. In 1925 the Indian National Congress at its Karachi session decided that Hindustani should be the *lingua franca* of India. A few years later the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan met at Nagpur and Mahatma Gandhi invited a number of linguists and scholars there to consider the question. The Sammelan unfortunately modified the resolution of the Congress and suggested that Hindi-Hindustani should be the *lingua franca* of India. This decision created a great deal of stir, specially among the nationally minded Muslims.

who keenly desired a settlement, but were disappointed by this resolution. At Indore the decision of the Sahitya Sammelan was confirmed with the result that the communal tangle became much worse. The establishment of the Hindi Prachar Sabha and the intensification of attempts to propagate Sanskritized Hindi, led to a reaction and the Muslim League decided that Urdu should be considered the *lingua franca* of India. In May 1942, Mahatmaji laid the foundations of a new society called the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, which pledged its support to the decision of the Indian National Congress concerning Hindustani. Thus there are now three claimants to the status—Modern Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu, and we have to consider which one of them should be made the *lingua franca* of India.

The problem is important because language is basic to all culture. Outside India, linguistic problems have arisen in other parts of the world. In Ireland there has been a fierce agitation concerning the language of the Irish people and in spite of the fact that practically every educated Irishman knows English, they have adopted the Irish language as their national language. There has been agitation in Wales for the recognition of Welsh and no less a person than Mr. Lloyd George has been responsible for giving a strong

impetus to the movement. Historians have pointed out that Poland is still alive as a nation and still aspires to an independent status because the Polish poets and Polish writers have kept alive the Polish language and the traditions of Poland enshrined in that language. The linguistic question has affected the rise of nationalities in the East. In Iran there has been a movement that the Irani language should be shorn of the elements which it adopted when Iran was conquered by the Arabs and that a purely Iranian language should be the national language of Iran. In Turkey too there has been an endeavour to make the original Turkish language without the accretions of the later times, the language of Turkey. All this shows that language is regarded by people as indissolubly connected with their culture and necessarily the problem of *lingua franca* for India is a matter of great and serious import to Indians.

In order to understand the Indian situation it is necessary to consider how the languages which are being talked of in connection with the *lingua franca* of India have evolved. The history of languages shows that these languages—Modern Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu—are all Aryan languages. Philologists are agreed that they are descendants of the original Indo-Aryan

dialect. No breath, therefore, need be wasted in proving that the *lingua franca* of India must be a language which is derived from the ancient Indo-Aryan tongue. This Aryan tongue which came to India with the Aryan conquerors developed and branched out into a number of languages. It is an interesting fact which all should keep in mind that among the different branches of the family it has always been the language of what is called the Madhya Desha which has been the *lingua franca* of India. The dialect of the Aryan spoken in the Punjab was different from the dialect spoken in the East. But neither Punjabi Aryan nor Eastern Aryan was adopted as the language of learning and culture. It was the Aryan of the middle country, the country around the headwaters of the Saraswati which developed into Sanskrit, and Sanskrit spread from the Madhya Desha to all parts of India. Later on when Buddhism arose in India in the beginning of the 6th century B. C., Sanskrit ceased to be the spoken language of the people. From among the spoken dialects one or two dialects, the dialects of the East, Magadhi and Ardha-Magadhi were chosen by Buddha and Mahavira for preaching their religious doctrines. But the interesting thing is that the languages which Buddha and Mahavira used were modified.

in contact with the Madhya Desha language, namely Sanskrit, and developed into Pali and the Jaina Ardha-Magadhi and became steeped with Sanskrit influences. Thus, in a way, the Madhya Desha language again triumphed when Pali became the *lingua franca* of India. The Asokan inscriptions which are all in Pali spread the vogue of this *Koine*.

From the 6th century B. C. to the 6th century A. D. these languages continued to flourish. Then came the period from the 6th century A. D. to the 12th century A. D. when changes took place and Pali ceased to be a spoken language, as also Ardha-Magadhi. Apabhramsha, that is to say, a form of spoken Prakrit, now occupied the field. This Apabhramsha also developed a literature which is found scattered all over northern India. In the 12th century there were several Apabhramshas in use, but of these one called the Saurseni is of paramount importance. The Saurseni Apabhramsha is the mother of the dialects now spoken in the midland region. One of these was spoken in the territory from the banks of the Sutlej to Delhi and over western Rohilkhand, another in the Agra and Muttra territory and another in the Bundelkhand region. These are called by the linguists branches of Western Hindi. Towards

the east of the region are spoken branches of Eastern Hindi. Further east, there are other languages, Maithili, Magahi, Bhojpurī, and still further east Bengali, Assamese and Oriya. In the west prevail Rajasthani and Gujarati; towards the south Marathi; in the north-west Punjabi. These dialects—they are known as the neo-Aryan dialects or the tertiary Prakrits—began developing from the 12th century.

Today Indians speak about 179 languages and 544 dialects (according to Grierson's *The Linguistic Survey of India*). But the fact is that a vast majority of these languages and dialects is spoken by a few hundred people. There are really 12 languages into which India may be linguistically divided and the problem is which one of these 12 should be accepted as the *lingua franca* of India. Of these 12, four are Dravidian languages. According to the census of 1931 over 26 millions speak the Telugu language. Next to Telugu comes the Tamil language, spoken by about 21 millions, Kannad by over 11 millions and Malayalam by over 9 millions. Altogether the Dravidian languages account for 71 million people in India. About 260 millions speak Indo-Aryan dialects. None of the Dravidian languages appears to be destined to fill the role of the *lingua franca* of India. One reason is

that the Dravidian languages themselves have come under the influence of the Aryan languages and much of their cultural and learned vocabulary has been derived from Sanskrit. Then they are languages of a peripheral region remote from the centres of life. It is impossible for these languages to push out of that area to occupy the rest of India. In fact these languages have been receding before the advance of Aryan languages. Although in the past sometimes the Dravidian languages had driven the boundaries of Aryan northwards, today the tendency is that the Dravidian languages are losing ground before the Aryan languages. In the regions of Central India and the Deccan, the Aryan languages are gaining more and more territory. It has also to be remembered that 260 millions speak the Aryan languages and only 71 millions the Dravidian languages.

The eight Aryan languages which are most widely spoken are Bengali, Punjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, Oriya, Bihari, Rajasthani and Hindi (eastern and western).

Among these Hindi with its near relations Bihari and Rajasthani is the most wide-spread. Bengali with about 53½ million speakers comes next. Some people advocate the desirability of



adopting Bengali as the *lingua franca* of India. Recently a member of the Indian Civil Service expressed this view in the *Statesman*. Bengali possesses undoubtedly the richest literature of any among modern Aryan languages. Unfortunately it is the speech of a border province, while the tendency in linguistic development has been for politically central regions to acquire for their language the national status. For instance, the national language of England is the dialect of the Midland; of France the language of Ile de France of which Paris is the centre; of Germany which remained disunited till the fourth-quarter of the 19th century, the language of the Berlin stage; of Italy the speech of Rome; of ancient India, the language of the Madhya Desha. Thus the political and cultural centre of a country tends to be the linguistic centre too, and its language becomes the medium of intercourse between its different regions. These arguments seem decisive against Bengali.

Punjabi which has 24 million speakers (of both its branches together) is losing its status as a literary language, for the Punjab is replacing it with Urdu. Marathi spoken by 21 million people, Gujarati and Oriya by 11 millions each can hardly claim to compete with Hindi, which is one of the most widely spoken and understood

of languages of the world. According to Dr. S. K. Chatterji, "it is the natural *lingua franca* of 257 millions, besides being understood by a few millions more, and in either of its two forms, High Hindi and Urdu, it is the literary language of over 140 millions. It is thus the third great language of the world, coming after Northern Chinese and English."

The question is, which of the forms of this language ought to be adopted as the *lingua franca* of India.

Dr. S. K. Chatterji has suggested the simplified Hindustani or the Bazaar Hindustani for this purpose. According to him it is that spoken Hindi speech which eschews the grammatical gender of nouns, adjectives and verbs, avoids plurals and abolishes certain peculiar verbal forms. It is, however, extremely doubtful if this suggestion will be accepted. Simplified Hindustani may be good enough as "the interprovincial speech of the masses", but it will be a debilitated and devitalized speech for the educated. Such a speech will not do as the medium of literary expression, for it is not going to be merely a *patois* of the vulgar, it will have to serve as the instrument of the highest education for its speakers, as the language of state documents, of state legislation, and of diplomacy. Hindi in its different

styles already possesses a rich and ancient literature and the adoption of the new-fangled Bazaar Hindustani will cut it off from its moorings.

Simplified or Bazaar Hindustani decidedly does not offer the right solution to the problem.

In order to decide between the various forms of the midland speech, it is necessary to have recourse to the science of philology. Now according to philology every speech is fundamentally a phonetic system, and this system obeys certain morphological or grammatical rules. These two constitute the genius of a language. But a speech is also a collection of words which embody the phonetic values of the language and which express their meaning and change their forms in accordance with the rules of its grammar. The phonetic and morphological structures of a language are fixed, while its vocabulary changes constantly under the impress of sociological changes.

All philologists are agreed that the phonetic and morphological systems of Modern Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu are identical, and that they differ from the Sanskrit and Persian systems materially. In fact these three are three developed forms of the same dialect which is designated by the name of Khari Boli—a branch of Western.

Hindi. Although this dialect is the lineal descendant of the primary Prakrits, the old Indo-Aryan, which developed into Sanskrit, its sound system is vastly different from that of Sanskrit. Khari Boli has lost a number of Sanskrit vowels *e. g.*, *r* (ऋ); it has acquired new vowels, *e. g.*, *ai*, *au* (सैर=sair; और=aur). Its consonantal sounds too have become different by losses and gains. A number of nasals and one of the sibilants (*s=ष*) have disappeared; some rolled lateral and flapped sounds (*rh=ढ*, *lh=ल्ह*, *rh=ऱ्ह*) have entered from non-Aryan Indian tongues, others like an uvular plosive (*k=क़*) and fricatives (dento-labial *f=फ़*, palatal *z=ज़*, glottal *kh*, *gh=ख़*, *ग़*) have come from Perso-Arabic languages. It has developed certain peculiarities of pronunciation; for example, it drops the ultimate short vowels like *a*, *i*, *u* (अ, इ, उ), it tends to break up compound consonants, and does not tolerate them at the beginning of words; while Sanskrit words end mostly in vowels, Khari Boli words end in consonants.

Not only is the phonetic system of Khari Boli different from that of Sanskrit, its grammatical and morphological rules too are different. One

example is enough to prove this. Sanskrit has seven forms of the declension of nouns, of which six constitute the cases of Sanskrit. Khari Boli and its forms Modern Hindi and Urdu have lost all these forms and the number of its true cases cannot be reckoned at more than three.

The difference between Modern Hindi and Urdu then is not a difference of the fundamental and stable aspects of language, but is a difference merely of vocabulary which is an ever-varying element of language. Now every language finds the need of new words, for man's mental and material environment is constantly changing. New ideas, new sentiments, new objects and new processes are always and continually arising and the old are always passing away. To meet this need languages have recourse either to borrowing words from other languages or to building new words from old words. German is a building, English a borrowing language. Modern Hindi and Urdu are like English. The process of borrowing and building goes on constantly under the stress of social and historical forces. The Germans tried to expel words of foreign origin from their language during the first World War, and the Russians did the same. In England the name of the ruling family was changed from Hanover to Windsor.

In the case of Modern Hindi and Urdu the rising tides of communalism and revivalism have flooded them with words derived from the ancient classics. Hindi is being rapidly Sanskritized and Urdu Arabicized. Hindi writers eschew words containing sounds which are common to Khari Boli and Perso-Arabic, Urdu writers hesitate to use sounds which do not occur in the Perso-Arabic phonetic system. Both forget that it is now too late in the day to modify the sound structure of the dialect which is the basis of both Hindi and Urdu. That dialect is the spoken tongue of the people inhabiting the region round Delhi and Meerut, and that dialect has its own peculiar genius. If writers of Hindi and Urdu will continue to depart from the genius of their basic speech they will only succeed in creating two artificial languages which will suffer the fate which befell the literary languages of India in the past. The more artificial a language becomes the more surely it ceases to be a living tongue.

Now if from philology we turn to literature much light is thrown upon the relations of Modern Hindi and Urdu. In the period when the Apabhramsha stage of development was passing and the stage of new Indo-Aryan was being ushered in, Muslim conquerors appeared upon

the scene in India. Their armies contained men speaking languages which had come under the influence of Arabic, and recognized the Arabic language as the sacred medium of their religious thought. When they settled in Delhi, they made the region of Khari Boli dialect the centre of their power. Naturally as a result of their contact Khari Boli underwent a profound change. It acquired the new sounds of which mention has been made, it became the medium of intercourse between the new-comers and the old inhabitants, and developed into the modern speech with all its phonetic and morphological characteristics.

When the Delhi armies penetrated into the Deccan which was annexed to the Sultanate early in the 14th century, contact was established between the speakers of the modified Khari Boli (which may for the sake of convenience be called spoken Hindustani) and the Southerners. The Sultans encouraged the settlement of people from the North in the towns of the Deccan, and even today one finds their descendants in Aurangabad and Daulatabad. With them migrated Hindustani speech too.

The earliest use of Hindustani as a literary language was made by the Sufi saints and religious teachers of the Deccan to propagate the

faith and to expound its doctrines. Khwaja Gesudaraz Bandanawaz who after Timur's invasion of the North migrated to Gulbarga, about 1412 A. D., appears to have been the first writer. He died in 1421 A. D. Once adopted as a medium of literary expression, the language made rapid progress. The Deccan Sultans patronized it, and in the course of two centuries it became enriched with an abundant literature.

The Hindustani employed by the Deccanese—and called by them Hindi—is redolent of the soil from which it sprang. It is dominated by *tad-bhava* vocabulary and has a sprinkling of words of Persian or Arabic origin. Even these are sometime spelt as they were pronounced and not as they appeared in books. With the passage of time the borrowed element increased but it was well-digested. From the end of the 14th to the end of the 17th century this Hindustani style flourished and bore ample fruit.

Then Aurangzeb began his campaigns which ended in the break up of the Deccan Kingdoms. With the disappearance of the Sultans and the dissolution of their courts, their proteges—artists and poets—were scattered. Some came to the North and stimulated the growth of the Hindustani literature in its native region. Wali



was one of them. Delhi had till then been almost a stranger to the literature of Hindustani. Almost but not entirely, for a writer here and a writer there had appeared from time to time, but there was no serious continuous literary effort.

While Hindustani was making rapid strides in the South, the North witnessed the rise of literatures, largely religious, in Avadhi and Brajbhasha. Both Hindus and Muslims patronised these languages. Avadhi was brought into vogue by reformers and poets like Kabir and Malik Muhammad Jayasi, and on the foundation laid by them Tulasidas reared the magnificent structure of *Ramcharitmanas*. Braja speech became the voice of *bhakti* to Krishna. If Surdas poured out the yearnings of his heart in his immortal songs, Raskhan, a Muslim, vied with him in composing lyrics of moving beauty. And Rahim, the son of Bairam Khan excelled in didactic poems. Here is a miracle of linguistic and cultural history. Sons born of fathers who were complete aliens to the thought and speech of India meet with the highest exponents of the native culture on terms of equality !

The Mughal court extended its patronage to Braj, for it did not know of Hindustani and of its literature. So, Sur, Gang, Bana, Keshav

Misr, Sahaj-Sanehi, Sundar, Siromani Banarsidas, Matiram, Anandghan, and many others received royal favours and princely awards. It was not till the decline of the Empire had set in that Urdu found any encouragement. But when at the end of the 18th century it was taken notice of, the high tide of Braj was on ebb, the mood of spiritual exaltation was passing and the strident note of sensual amours and amorous rhetoric was beginning to ring.

The practitioners of Hindustani at Delhi were men whose ears were familiar with Persian sounds and whose tongues were habituated to utter them. The phonetics of the Deccani Hindustani were a strain upon them. To utter the cerebrals, plosives and palatal affricatives, or the alveolar flapped or rolled consonants was a task too difficult for their tongues. They naturally started a purification of the language which robbed it of a considerable part of its inheritance. What, however, Mazhar Jan Janan had only begun at Delhi, Nasikh of Lucknow, the capital of the Persian Kings of Oudh, completed. Thus Hindustani became transformed into Urdu.

Urdu, however, was regarded by both Hindus and Mussalmans of the 18th century as their *lingua franca*. Bhartendu Harishchandra, one

of the pioneers of Modern Hindi, acknowledged in the middle of the 19th century that Urdu was the language of polite speech in the North even among the members of his community (Agarwals). So when the East India Company ordered the establishment of the Fort William College in Calcutta to teach Indian languages to their officers, Urdu was the language for which teachers were appointed, as also for the classical languages, Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit and provincial languages like Bengali and Brajbhasha.

Modern Hindi was till then unknown, for no literature existed in it. It was at this time that it began to be employed for literary purposes. The professors of the college encouraged Lallocji Lal and other teachers to compose books in the language used by the Urdu writers, but to substitute Sanskritic words (*tatsama*) for Persian and Arabic words. Thus the new style was born which was considered specially suited to the requirements of the Hindus, and the Christian missionaries gave a fillip to it by translating the Bible in it.

The new style (which is now known as Hindī) took a long time to become popular. In fact it was only after the Mutiny of 1857, that Modern Hindi began to attract attention. Special efforts were made to foster it. It was about this time

that Beames, Kellog and others wrote grammars to establish its claims. Even Provincial Governors went about dissuading people from the use of Urdu.

After a few years (about 1872) the anti-Muslim bias began to die out and a reaction came in favour of Urdu. The Ilbert Bill agitation in Bengal and national stirrings in other parts of India were causing alarm and it was not politic to keep the Muslim community perpetually under disfavour. Sir W. W. Hunter and some other officers began to advocate their cause, and to promote cultural particularism. When the Indian National Congress was founded, the Muslims considered it in their interests to remain aloof. In the atmosphere of communal rivalry the seeds of Hindi-Urdu controversy germinated.

Although Modern Hindi is a recent growth, for its beginnings do not go beyond the 19th century and its real development has taken place within the last sixty years, it has made rapid strides, and today the situation is that a large number of people read and write it and numerous books and journals are published in it, so that its popularity is daily on the increase. Urdu literature has also made great progress, and at least one University in the country has adopted it as the medium of instruction. But

the unfortunate feature of their advance is that these languages are becoming identified more and more with special communities and communalism in politics is invading the field of culture. This is a deplorable development, for throughout the period of Mughal rule in India, Urdu and Braj languages flourished side by side and there was no rivalry between their votaries, for both were patronised by Hindus and Mussalmans alike !

The situation then is that Urdu and Modern Hindi are both claimants to the status of the *lingua franca* of India. The advocates of Urdu point out that it is older in age, that it is a product of fusion of Hindu and Muslim cultures, that members of both communities have shared in its growth, both have regarded it till recently as their common speech. It is spreading outside India. The presence in it of words of Persian and Arabic origin is a meritorious feature, for through them it maintains its links with the classics of the second largest community in India, and with the two modern living languages spoken by the Asiatic and African neighbours of India with whom our relations are likely to grow in intimacy in future.

Modern Hindi claims a close kinship with such Indian languages as Marathi, Gujarati,

Bengali, Punjabi, Oriya etc, which are all descendants of a common Indo-Aryan mother-tongue. Hindi is therefore easier for the speakers of these languages than Urdu. Sanskritization of Hindi makes for closer relationship between the modern Indian languages of the same family. Even Dravidian languages are saturated with Sanskritic vocabularies and on that account come nearer to Hindi than Urdu.

The arguments of the protagonists of the two are weighty, but not decisive. Language is a medium of social intercourse. The nature of society and its needs must determine its characteristics, and not merely considerations of convenience. Today India exists largely as a geographical unity, if it is to grow into a living unified society, into a consolidated nation, it can only do so by the fusion of the communities. Such a fusion will be possible only when each community is assured that its language, religion and culture is preserved as an organic part of the whole.

If then our dream of one society and one nation for our one country is to be transformed into reality, and if we desire that this society should, as the expression and symbol of its unity, have one *lingua franca*, then it is inevitable that the *lingua franca* should be a composite speech,

containing elements from the speech of the communities. It is impossible for this common speech to draw its sustenance exclusively from one culture source, as Urdu and Hindi are tending to do today.

The solution of the linguistic problem is simple. All today agree that the dialect of the Delhi region which is the common basis of Modern Hindi and Urdu should be recognized as the common medium of interprovincial intercourse. This dialect has certain fixed phonetical and morphological features, but it assumes two separate styles on account of the use of two different types of vocabularies. What is needed in order to bring them together is to evolve a common vocabulary in accord with the phonetic genius of the dialect.

As the dialect (to which the name Hindustani may be given) is not to serve merely as the speech of the market place, as "Bazaar Hindustani" in the words of Dr. S. K. Chatterji, but also as the language of culture and learning, of science and literature, of state documents and international diplomacy, it must be an elevated and dignified speech, rich in words and phrases and flexible to a degree.

The literary Hindustani must, therefore, evolve a copious vocabulary, an abundant terminology ;

which it can do if the attempt at exclusiveness is abandoned. Let Hindustani lay under contribution Sanskrit and Prakrit, Arabic and Persian, English and other languages, but let it not succumb to the domination of any one of them. Whatever is borrowed must receive the stamp of Hindustani, its phonetic system and its grammatical rules. Otherwise Hindustani will lose its soul and become a dead imitative automaton.

And although Hindi and Urdu are mainly borrowing languages, there is no reason why Hindustani should not develop the capacity to form words and derivatives from its original words or from borrowed words. Even Hindi and Urdu are showing this tendency, but unfortunately they make their derivatives not always in accordance with their own genius, but in accordance with rules of Sanskrit and Arabic.

In regard to technical terms it is necessary to adopt a defined policy. The present situation is extremely chaotic. Words are being adopted or framed quite arbitrarily. Writers of Modern Hindi take their terms from English and Sanskrit, those of Urdu lean upon Persian and Arabic. The gulf between the two languages whose structure is identical is thus being widened. It is quite evident that neither Sanskrit nor Arabic can really meet our needs



satisfactorily. These languages do not possess the necessary terms. In their absence what is being attempted is to take the roots from Sanskrit or Arabic and form terms from them. This process has limitations, apart from the drawback that it does violence to the genius of the language. Sanskrit words have phonetic values unsuited to Hindi, Urdu or Hindustani speech. Arabic suffers from the additional defect that it has little capacity to form compounds. Neither of them can provide enough terms for all sciences and some dependence upon European languages is therefore inevitable.

Instead of laying down general rules regarding all the sciences, it appears to be more practical to consider groups of sciences separately and adopt the rules of borrowing or forming terms for each. It must be remembered that the number of technical terms is quite large for different sciences, and is daily growing, as a reference to the dictionaries of technical terms in English will show.

Now sciences may be grouped according to their linguistic or literary requirements as follows :

- (1) Mathematical sciences, which require exact and extensive terminologies, but not many general words ;

- (2) Natural Sciences like Chemistry, Physics, Zoology, Botany, Physiology, Anatomy, Geology, Geography, where again terminology dominates, but descriptive matter is increased ;
- (3) Sciences relating to man, such as Anthropology, Sociology, Economics, Philosophy, Politics, Jurisprudence, Psychology, etc., where the amount of general vocabulary is still larger ;
- (4) Subjects like History, Biography, Travel, etc., where terminology is subordinated to general expression ;
- (5) Pure literature including Poetry, Drama, Fiction, Short Story, *Belle-lettres*, etc., where expression and style is everything.

Now in the first two groups the most practical solution is the adoption largely of the English terminology. Only it must be adapted to the linguistic peculiarities of Hindustani, for which definite rules can be framed. In the case of the third group borrowing from English is not easy. Here it may be possible to lay the classics—Sanskrit and Arabic—under contribution, and a search in the kindred languages, in the *tadbhava* elements may lead to satisfactory results. So far as the fourth group is concerned

the resources of Hindustani itself should be explored, and any shortcomings made up by loans from Indian classics and modern languages.

Pure literature cannot be regimented and no attempt should be made to force any vocabulary on any writer of creative literature. The demand of people cured of their communal hysteria will determine the supply, and the nearer an author is to the people, the more his language is bound to be the simple speech common to all. Literature in every language comprises numerous styles from the difficult and learned, which appeals to a limited coterie, to the easy and simple, which attracts ever larger masses of men.

If agreement is arrived at on the question of technical terms on such principles as these, if care is taken not to burden speech with sounds and expressions foreign to its genius, and if due respect is paid to its structural principles and grammatical rules, then it will not be difficult to arrest the growing separation between Urdu and Modern Hindi, and to evolve a language which will not merely solve the problem of medium of education in the vast region stretching from the Indus to Kosi and the Himalayas to Satpura, but also supply the need of India for a *lingua franca*.

**MEDIEVAL LANGUAGE AND  
LITERATURE OF INDIA**



The appearance of modern Indian languages marks the transition from the ancient to the middle age in Indian History. They became the media of literature and the instruments of medieval thought. It is true that Sanskrit continued to be cultivated ; but with the downfall of Hindu principalities and the drying up of the sources of patronage its vogue rapidly diminished. It still remained the language of orthodox religious literature and of philosophy and treatises were composed in it on ancient sciences, but the days of its glory were over. The cultural currents which began to sweep the country from the 12th century onwards left the channels of Sanskrit dry and flowed through new beds. The creative impulses of India passed it by and inspired new dialects. As the magnificent treasure-house of ancient Indian culture, Sanskrit still commanded the homage of the people and exercised a deep influence over the growth of new languages and literatures but for the expression of living experience and thought, its usefulness had ceased.

The conquerors of India brought with them a number of languages from abroad. Among them were Arabic, Persian and Turkish. Arabic, as the language of religion and of law, was cultivated by the learned but its sphere was limited. Turkish might be spoken within the domestic walls but it did not possess any considerable literature. Its influence was small. Persian was the language of the court. It was used not only as an official language for all state purposes, it was the medium of social intercourse and it was the favourite of kings and princes, of officers and soldiers, merchants and mendicants. Patronage of learning was regarded in those times an important function of Government and the centres of political authority attracted numerous aspirants to royal favour. Prose and poetry writers from Persia or Central Asia and Indian authors, born and bred in the country, displayed their skill at the courts of princes to win their favour. Thus there grew up in India a school of Persian writers who vied with the natives of Persia in enriching the literature of that language.

While it may be difficult to assess the contribution of India to Arabic literature, it is easy, with the help of the anthologies (*tazkira*-) to compile a goodly study of the considerable output of Persian literature from Indian pens. But

inevitably the Persian literature of India has been dominated by the standards set by the Persians, and although, in language, style and content, the Persian literature of India bears the indubitable impress of its land of origin and there is little doubt regarding its high quality, it cannot be claimed that this literature is redolent of the native soil or that it adequately enshrines the genius and spirit of the Indian people.

For the understanding of the medieval Indian mind, it is necessary to study the languages which were the living media of expression, and among them Hindustani, Braja and Avadhi may be taken for illustration. All the three are closely related, but the first two are daughters of the same mother. The evolution of these languages is a deeply interesting study, not only from the point of view of past history, but also for the understanding of some problems which afflict us in our own times and upon the solution of which our future largely depends.

All these are of Aryan descent—offspring of the Aryan speech, which was brought into India by emigrants from Central Asia and which, after passing through different stages, at last emerged in the form of Apabhramsha in the sixth century A. D.—the century which saw the decline



of the type of polity represented by Harsha and the rise of Rajput kingdoms. Apparently the older literary Prakrits had now become stereotyped and distant from the spoken dialects which were continuously changing. Apabhramsha denotes the literary phase of the spoken secondary Prakrits which came to the fore from the sixth century. Whether every one of the Prakrits had an Apabhramsha or not cannot be stated with certainty. Grammarians, like Markandeya, seem to indicate that that was so. But only two or three of them were of importance, the best known among them being Nagar. It had probably two forms, one western and the other eastern. The western Apabhramsha, however, was used more extensively for literary purposes. The Apabhramsha literature in the west is quite abundant, for the Jains used it for writing religious books, among which may be mentioned Haribhadra's *Samaraichcha Kaha*, Dhanvala's *Bhavisatta Kaha*, Pushpadanta's *Jasahar Chariu*, *Savayadhammadoha*, etc.

In the east, the sect of the Siddhas used Apabhramsha for their religious texts. Examples are the *Doha Kosha* and *Charyapadas*, which contain the compositions of Saraha, Kanha, and others. Grammarians, like Hema Chandra, in the 12th century, Trivikrama in the 16th century and Markandeya in the 17th laid

down its rules and culled illustrative verses from previous authors.

Apabhramsha is of interest to students of modern Indian languages as it is the last stage of the secondary Prakrits from which modern languages are derived. Before taking them up, attention may be drawn to a form of Apabhramsha, known as Avahattha, which was employed by the well-known poet Vidyapati of Mithila in his interesting work *Kirtilata*. It contains the story of two princes of Mithila, who travelled to Jaunpur, in order to lay a complaint against the conduct of a Muslim captain, who had killed their father, before the ruler of Jaunpur—the famous King Ibrahim Shah. The poem gives a contemporary picture of the city under the Sharqi Kingdom.

The last stage in the history of India's linguistic evolution, begins in the period which saw India invaded by the Ghaznavides and the Ghoris. The modern languages of India, grouped together as the new Indo-Aryan languages or tertiary Prakrits, developed from the Apabhramshas and possibly in some cases directly from the secondary Prakrits. Unfortunately their history is largely enveloped in obscurity.

Among the Prakrits of Northern India, Saurseni and Ardha Magadhi were important. But

what relation they bore to the Apabhramshas known as western and eastern Nagar, it is extremely difficult to state. In all likelihood, the western Apabhramshas gave rise to such western modern languages as Rajasthani, Punjabi and Western Hindi; while the eastern Apabhramsha developed into Avadhi and the Purbi dialects.

Western Hindi is a modern name which is used to cover the group of dialects spoken in the region watered by the upper reaches of the Jumna and the Ganges. They include Khari Boli, Braja and Bundeli. Punjabi is spoken to their north, Rajasthani to their west, Avadhi to their east and Marathi to their south. Khari Boli is the dialect of the northern region from Sarhind to Delhi and Meerut to Bijnor; Braj belongs to the middle region whose centre is Mathura; and Bundeli lies to the south.

Of this group of dialects, Punjabi need not be considered here. Rajasthani played an important part in the early middle ages in the greater part of northern India, for it had the patronage of Rajput princes, especially the Sisodias of Mewar. It was used as the medium of heroic ballads and bardic poems, as well as of religious and devotional verse. It had a prose literature too, consisting of narratives of notable deeds

of princes. The famous *Prithviraja Raso*, of Chand Bardai, however, is written in such mixed dialects as to be of little value for determining the history of Rajasthani. Gauri Shanker Hirachand Ojha, a well known scholar of Rajputana, does not consider its date to be earlier than the 16th century. The use of Rajasthani continued from the end of the 14th to the end of the 18th century, but after the 15th century it was confined to Rajputana. Avadhi or Purbi Hindi, which traces its descent from Ardha Magadhi Prakrit, through a possible eastern Apabhramsha, has had a chequered career. The Jainas had employed Ardha Magadhi in their religious books but the relation of Jaina Ardha Magadhi with modern Avadhi is not clear. The language of the compositions of the Siddhas is an eastern dialect claimed by some as akin to old eastern Hindi and by others to Bengali. In the 15th century, when the eastern districts of ancient Avadha sprang into fresh activity as a result of the establishment of the Sharqi dynasty, Avadhi seems to have received a new stimulus. Kabir, a speaker of Avadhi, presumably composed his *Bani* (Sayings) in this dialect. Some doubt has been thrown upon Kabir's language on account of the fact that his printed works, published by the Nagari Pracharini Sabha on the basis of what the editor considered a 16th century

manuscript, is mixed Purabi, Panjabi and Rajasthani. On the other hand, Kabir's poems contained in the Adigranth of the Sikhs—a compilation of early 17th century, are in almost unmixed Avadhi.

Kabir lived in the 15th century. He had many followers who used his native dialect. But a school of Sufi poets also arose here which employed Avadhi. Among them Qutban was the first. He wrote a poem entitled *Mrigarati*, in 1501, which is the story of the love of the Prince of Chandranagar and Princess Mrigavati, of Kanchanpur. There were other poets of the same school but Malik Muhammad Jayasi is the most famous among them. He composed the well-known poem *Padmavat* in 1540 A. D.

All poets of Avadhi, however, were eclipsed by Tulasidas, the author of the immortal *Ram-charitamanas*, who lived in the 17th century. Tulasidas had really no successor of eminence, although Avadhi claims a considerable number of poets. Ultimately, the language was eclipsed by the greater popularity of Braj. The origin of Braj, like that of a number of other dialects, is still shrouded in darkness. There are no certain data yet available to carry back the story of its literature beyond the commencement of

the 16th century. As a spoken dialect it must have come into vogue in the 13th century, and it is likely that popular songs in Braj were current from the very beginning, but its employment as a literary vehicle appears to have begun when Vallabhacharya came to settle down in Brajmandal at the end of the 15th century. He founded a new sect in which devotion to Krishna was the central object. He gathered round him many disciples among whom eight attained fame. The greatest of them was Surdas, whose *padas* (songs) are recognised as giving most adequate expression to the deepest emotions of a devotee towards his beloved deity. With Surdas Braj leapt into fame as a fit medium for song and poetry. Its sweetness so enraptured northern India that it spread all over the north as the language of literature. Even Bengal, which had its own literary language, made use of a corrupt Braj—called Brajbuli, for Krishnait poetry. The domination of Braj lasted till well into the 19th century. Only during the last 50 years it has been gradually displaced by modern Hindi.

Hindustani the northern dialect of western Hindi, named Khari Boli, to distinguish it from Braj, called Rekhta and Hindwi by Amir Khusru, Dakhini and Urdu by its southern and northern speakers, is one of those obscure dialects which

the ancient midland—the home of Sanskrit, evolved. Saurseni Prakrit, Nagar or Saurseni Apabhramsha were its predecessors. Its phonetic and morphological systems were derived from the secondary Prakrits. But while it was still a spoken dialect, it came under the influence of people who spoke Persian and Arabic. It received new sounds from them and evolved an ampler phonetic system. Along with new sounds, many new words of Turkish, Persian and Arabic origin entered into its vocabulary. So far as its grammar was concerned, it underwent very little modification, though the structure of phrases and the methods of derivation of words and compounds, were changed to a small extent and minor grammatical forms and usages were adopted from Persian.

The dialect thus developed had an extraordinarily curious history. In its own homeland it remained a more or less despised mongrel *patois*, employed as a means of communication between the foreigner and the people, more or less as pidgin English is used in Madras and other cantonments, where there is a considerable colony of the British. But there is hardly any authentic literary work which might testify to its use in literature till later.

Against this statement, mention may be made of the use of Hindi words in the poems of Persian poets, instances of which are found in the works of Fa rukhi, Manuchehri, Mukhtari, Hakim Sanai and others of the Ghaznavide period. Even more important than this is the fact that Masud Sad Salman is reported to have composed a whole Diwan in Hindi. He was born in Mahmud Ghaznavi's reign and acquired fame in Sultan Ibrahim's time. What form of Hindi language he used it is impossible to determine, but the lines of his Diwan give instances of the Khari Boli forms, e. g.

Ae parastare sang-o-sukh darpan

Wai giriftare ishq-e-sham'a-o-lagan

Dil na mi arzad ki az mastiash kas

Warihanadya ba byohare dihad

It may, therefore, be inferred that those Persian poets who resided in the Punjab were employing Khari Boli. Again Amir Khusrau, who was born in 1253 and died in 1325, is described as the author of quite a considerable number of verses in Hindi. The statement is gravely doubted, but the preface to his Diwan, *Ghurraatual Kamal*, contains a line :—

Ari ari haman bayari aeyi

Maree maree birah ki maree aeyee



Apart from this, Hindi words are scattered through his verses. Again, Fariduddin Ganj Shakar, who died in 1265, is quoted in his biographies as having used the phrase

Poonon ka Chand bala hota hai

a fine Khari Boli sentence. His poems are included in the *Adigraanth* too, but their language is Punjabi. Similarly, phrases of Hamiduddin Nagori, Bu Ali Qalandar, Sharafuddin Yahya Muniri are reproduced. It has been asserted that Khawaja Muinuddin Chishti too employed Hindi in his talks. However that may be, the fact remains that these centuries up to the 15th furnish little evidence of independent Khari Boli literature in the north. Though undoubtedly it must have flourished as a spoken tongue and might even have produced songs and poems whose record is lost.

What the north failed to achieve, strangely enough, the Deccan accomplished. Alauddin Khilji's conquests had opened the country and numerous Sufi saints and Dervishes visited the south in order to spread their message. In the south Persian was an almost unknown tongue, and they were compelled to use the dialect of Delhi which they knew in order to carry on their work. Among these saints the one who

created the great st impression was Khwaja Gesudaraz Bandanawaz. He left the north when Timur invaded the Punjab in 1398 and settled down in the Deccan. He probably is the first writer of the Khari Boli, who made it a literary language. His *Risala*, *Mi'raj-ul Ashi-quin*, edited from a manuscript of 1500 A. D., gives an example of his language. Here are a few sentences from the *Risala* :

Insan ke boojne kon panch tan. Har ek tan ko panch darwaze hain hor panch darban hain. Pahla tan wajbul wajood. Muqam iska shaitani nafs iska aminara.<sup>1</sup>

Next to him is Shams-ul-Ushshaq Shah Miranji, who died in 1496. Many of his works have been preserved and they illustrate the language of the 15th century.

The 15th century produced quite a number of writers of this language. Bahauddin Bajan who lived at Berhampur was a Sufi poet. He wrote :

Yun bajan baje re asrar chhaje  
Mandal man men dhamke, rabab rang men jhamke,  
soofi un par thumke.

Nizami was a poet at the court of Sultan Ahmad Shah III and lived in the 15th century.

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<sup>1</sup>The authenticity of this *Risala* is doubled.

He is the author of the first known allegorical poem (*Masnani*) in the language, entitled *Masnani Kadam Rao aur Padani*.

From this period—that is the end of the 14th century—this language, which may be called Hindustani, continues to progress rapidly. When Aurangzeb began the conquest of Bijapur and Golkonda, in the 17th century, the poets of the Deccan began to visit the North, and the consequence was that Hindustani poetry became known to the writers of Delhi and other places. The return of the prodigal to the paternal home led to a new development. The courtiers of the Emperors of Delhi were mainly speakers and writers of Persian but the Hindustani which came to them from the Deccan was the true representative of the mixture of Hindu-Muslim culture which prevailed among the peoples of India. They found it rather uncouth for their tastes and in their misguided zeal started to reform and, according to their judgment, purify it. Thus non-Persian sounds were regarded by them as harsh and heavy and they began to abandon all the words containing such sounds. Again, the Hindustani of the Deccan was the language originally of the ordinary common people which the Sufis had adopted for the reason that it was popular. It contained many

expressions which struck the ears of the aristocratic courtiers as vulgar.

Thus the language was shorn of a great deal of its naturalness, and the growing degeneracy and demoralisation of the Mughal court favoured the development of an artificial language and literature. During the 18th century, Hindustani was transformed into Urdu-i-Mualla. The patronage of the high and the mighty increased the number of its votaries. Unfortunately in the sequel it suffered from this change. Although it became the language of both Hindu and Muslim upper classes, its contact with the common people was weakened. At the end of the 18th century, the Mughal empire broke down. The British seized power, and, they began the search for a language which could be used for popular purposes. At Fort William College, Calcutta, which was established to teach British officers Indian languages besides other subjects, a number of them were taken up for study. Among them were Braj and Urdu. Braj, as has been indicated above, was the language of poetry and did not lend itself readily for the purposes of prose. Urdu, which was studied by both Hindus and Muslims, was naturally selected as the common language of India. Unfortunately the zeal for finding distinctions led the professors

of the College to encourage attempts to create a new type of Urdu from which all Persian and Arabic words were removed and replaced by Sanskrit words. This was done ostensibly to provide the Hindus with a language of their own. But the step had far-reaching consequences, and India is still suffering from this artificial bifurcation of tongues

The Hindustani, which the Deccanese developed, came into literary use at the end of the 14th or the beginning of the 15th century, that is, more than a quarter of a century previous to the establishment of Mughal rule in India. So far as the sister languages were concerned, Rajasthani and Avadhi were its contemporaries, but both went out of literary use before the end of the Mughal rule. Braj began a century later and continued its literary career till recent times, but it remained the language of poetry only and, therefore, condemned itself as the medium of serious prose, for a poetic language, howsoever fine, could not live long. Hindustani thus is the only survivor which has a history of unbroken service during a period of five centuries. If it desires to avoid the fate of its sisters, the only course before it is that it should return to the common people from whom it

sprang and become the medium of expression of their longings and fears, hopes and aspirations.

The evolution of Hindustani language shows the same processes of assimilation at work in medieval India as had led to the development of a common religious and mystical philosophy. A purely Indo-Aryan dialect was adopted by the missionaries of the Sufi religion of love for the propagation of their message—not only among the Muslims but also among the Hindus. By their efforts the dialect became a literary language. It is necessary then to survey the field of its literature.

In regard to Hindustani literature a number of misunderstandings exist in the minds of many people—among whom some at least ought to have known better. It is, for instance, not sufficiently widely recognised—and for this both Hindus and Muslims are to blame—that although the faith of the conquerors was different from that of the conquered, no sooner had the former settled down in the country than they forgot their foreign origins and began to look upon the country as their home. The pride of these foreigners in the land of their adoption is indeed amazing.

It was this pride which inspired the people of India and gave them a legitimate confidence

in their destiny. Even foreigners were dazzled by the India of those days and sighed for a sojourn here.

The courts of the Indian rulers were not open only to Persian poets. Numerous Hindu poets received patronage from them in the same way as the others. So far as Sanskrit poets are concerned, history mentions the following facts.

Before the Mughals the presence of Pandits is noted at the courts of most Sultans. Of Firoz, it is stated that he had Sanskrit works translated into Persian. Jalaluddin of Bengal was the patron of Brihaspati, on whom he conferred the title of Rai Mukut. He gave him an elephant and a pearl necklace in reward. Sher Shah Sur had in his service Bhuvananda and Todar Mal, and Salim Shah, Chandrakirti the author of *Saraswati Prakriya*. Akbar patronized a number of them—Vithal, Krishna Das, Gangadhar, Nrisinha, Bhanu Chand, Siddha Chand, Narayan Bhatt, Nilkantha and Kalidas. Jahangir's Pandits were Govind Sharma, Kavi Karnapur, Shah-jahan's Vedanga Rai, Kavindracharya, Parashu Ram Misra, Panditraj Jagannnath. Even Aurangzeb seems to have had Pandits for they translated for Azam's son a treatise from Sanskrit on the sciences.

The provincial rulers and noblemen were equally eager to support learning. Zain-ul-Abidin, of Kashmir was fond of hearing *Yoga Vasistha* and *Ramayana*. Pandit Srivara, of Kashmir, translated Jami's *Yusuf Zulaikha* from Persian into Sanskrit.

Of the Hindi or rather Braj poets who received encouragement and rewards at the Durbars the list is even longer. In fact it may be noted that the Mughal rulers were greater patrons of Braj than of Urdu. From Akbar to Aurangzeb not one had an Urdu poet at his court, but several Braj poets. Only after Aurangzeb's death and in fact from Muhammad Shah's reign, the patronage of Urdu began and that too without affecting the patronage of Braj.

The history of Indian languages, other than Hindi, shows similar generosity on the part of Muslim rulers, but it is impossible to speak of them all in this essay.

Another aspect of literature which is overlooked is that there was much give and take between Hindu and Muslim writers. An illustration of this tendency is the borrowing of Hindi words by Persian writers and of Persian words by writers of Braj, Avadhi, Marathi, Bengali, etc. Cases of Ghaznavide poets have been alluded



to already, but illustrations could be adduced from poets of every period. Gulbadan Begam's *Humayun Nama* contains a considerable number of Hindi words, the use of some of them is surprising for it indicates that newcomers to India adopted readily Indian manners and customs. This tendency became so pronounced that the phrase

Sher-i-Parasi ba rawishe mardume Hindustan.

was applied to Indian works of poetry. It is stated in one of the letters of Aurangzeb, that he was asked to give names to two new varieties of mango, and he selected *Rasana Vilas* and *Sudha Ras* as the most appropriate. Similarly he named the city of *Barnala*, *Nawaltara* and gave the names—*Agniban*, *Ramjangi*, *Gadhna* and *Gajna* to his guns.

So far as literary composition is concerned there was no prejudice on either side. The *Ramayana* of Tulasidas, the *padas* of Surdas, the *Satsai* of Bihari Lal and, in fact, every Avadhi and Braj work of those times used many words of Persian and Arabic origin.

The same spirit characterized authorship. Among Braj and Avadhi writers there were many Muslims and they took rank with the best Hindu poets. Raskhan compares favourably

with Surdas, Raslin and Pemi with Mati Ram and Chintamani; Rahim stands in a class by himself, and Jayasi is not inferior to anyone as an Avadhi writer.

That the Hindus reciprocated the compliment is well known. Persian and Urdu count many a Hindu votary who worshipped at their shrine. Chandrabhan *Brahman*, Anand Ram *Mukhlis* Lachhmi Narain *Shafiq*, Brindaban Das, Tekchand *Bahar* are only some of the Hindu writers of Persian. So far as Urdu is concerned their name is legion. In this connection it is noteworthy that throughout the middle age translations from Arabic and Persian into Sanskrit and Hindi and *vice versa* were frequent. They constituted a powerful means of bringing the two communities together. In view of these facts it is not surprising that the literatures of Hindustani, Braj and Avadhi show remarkable correspondences.

In considering them, the first principle to be kept in mind is that literature is a social product and must embody the ideas and ideals of the society to which it belongs. The literature which truly represents India's spirit and reflects India's mind in the middle ages is the literature in Indian languages—Hindustani, Braj, Avadhi and others. Now if one makes a broad survey

of the literature of the three languages certain important conclusions emerge.

It need not be repeated that the three languages received similar treatment from both the communities of India. In patronage and authorship there is much that is common to them. But the question of importance is whether there is anything in common in their form and substance. This is a difficult question but an attempt has been made here to answer it by a comparative study of these.

Now if the period during which these literatures flourished is analysed, it seems to fall into two divisions. The first part extends from the end of the 14th century to about the last quarter of the 17th century and the second comprises the next century and half.

Among the noted Hindustani poets of the first period we come across the names of Nizami, Wajahi, Muhammad Quli Qutub Shah, Ibn Nishati, Burhanuddin Janam, Muqimi, Shauqi, Nusarti, Aminuddin Ala. Their works consist predominantly of *masnavis*, *qasidas*, *marshias* or longer poems. The subjects of the *masnavis* may be divided into mystical tales, romances, biographical pieces; the *qasidas* (eulogies) deal either with the praises of the Prophet or Ali or some

great religious leader, or are encomiums on princes and Sultans. *Marsias* treat of the tragic events of Karbala. Religion, romance, heroism and war provide the basic emotional content of this poetry. It is poetry of high endeavour, of striving for greatness in this life or beyond. It is idealist in the true sense of the term. It applauds struggle, even suffering, in the cause of moral and spiritual progress. It is earnest and genuine. It is true because it calls upon man to be what the dignity of his manhood demands that he ought to be. It is true, therefore, to life and to nature. It avoids exaggeration, which is a form of distortion and, therefore, of falsehood. Its language is simple, racy, natural. Among these poems, quite a number are apparently translations either from Persian or Hindi, but in fact they are adaptations. Their style and manner are their own, and no one who reads them can say that they are not original, for their makers were skilled artists.

But when the second period is brought under survey, a very different picture is revealed. The poetry of the last quarter of the 17th and the 18th century is quite different in tone and in substance. So far as form is concerned the *ghazal* has become dominant. *Masnavis*, *qasidas* and *marsias* are not altogether abandoned, but

they have lost the ring of truth, earnestness and moral exaltation. The *masnavis*, of which Mir Hasan's *Sihru'l Bayan* may be taken as the best exemplar, show no power of construction or characterization. They are stories of an artificial exaggerated passion. Whereas many of the older *masnavis* suggested that human love and its sorrows and joys were transient and hinted at a state of things more truly and permanently satisfying, the later *masnavis* make no appeal to anything beyond fleeting sense-life. The *qasidas* of Sauda and Zauq are utterly jejune in spite of the frightening array of pompous words culled from the vocabularies of Arabic and Persian. They have lost the capacity of stating anything simply and in a straightforward manner. They are complex, full of all kinds of twists and turns. Nor even in *marsia*—which made a great advance upon its early form—is the old directness of statement and economy of feeling observed. The later poets revel in *ghazal*. Stereotyped in its subject matter, it gives unlimited opportunity for display of skill in the choice of words. This skill can not be denied. It occasionally amounts to genius, as in the case of Mir and Ghalib. But how is it possible to imprison within the straight jacket of *qafia* and *radif* so elusive a fairy as

the poetry of love? The very arrangement of the poems on so mechanical a basis as the last letter of the line condemns it. Such commonplace treatment of an exalted and ennobling human passion betokens nothing but lowering of standards of culture and refinement.

This judgment is harsh. Perhaps it needs qualification. For, there are some redeeming features of the poetry produced in these times of terrible disruption, decay and demoralisation. What compensates for the lack of substance in the poetry is the polish of form. While its content is on the whole meagre, the wonderful skill, in the choice of words and the turn of phrase, imparts to it a glow of unusual attractiveness. If harmony and appropriateness of sound constitute half the charm of poetry, then there is no doubt that Urdu will pass the test with flying colours. It must be remembered, however, that the period during which it flourished was extremely miserable, for intrigue, selfishness, treachery and defeat mark the history of the 18th century and this misery was bound to be communicated to literature. In so far as it reflects the life of the times, it serves its purpose. Yet after all is said, what a contrast between the earlier vigour and earnestness and the later

sentimentality which sicklies over the pale cast of thought.

And what about the literature in the sister languages Avadhi and Braj? It is not surprising that its history runs parallel to that of Hindustani and that it may be divided into the same two periods and that it shows, in these periods, the same traits of emotion and thought.

Who are the great writers between 1500 and 1650? Malik Muhammad Jayasi, Kabir, Surdas, Tulasidas. Next to them in importance are Dadu, Nandadas, Mirabai, Raskhan, Rahim, Senapati and Keshav. Except the last two, the predominant note of poetry is religious and moral. Jayasi's *Padmarat* is not a tale written for the delectation of idle youth absorbed in the tremendously trifling pursuit of romantic love, but a mystic allegory pointing to the everlasting quest of the human soul. Kabir, the most powerful denunciator of sham and hypocrisy that medieval India produced, is the high priest of a devotion to the divine principle which is beyond name and form. Surdas is a bard who sings of the entrancing love of the devotee to a personal God who assumes human attributes in order to pour his infinite grace upon man. Tulasidas, in his undying verse, brings God near to the heart of the simple common man by making Him a

human being with human relations, emotions, trials and vicissitudes. Their poetry did not follow the false principle, 'Art for Art's sake', but the higher law that Art is for the sake of man. This poetry was naturally characterised by earnestness, and in the sense that all creative literature is the literature of power, it has the supreme quality of persuasiveness. Coming straight from the heart, and not composed for the sake of effect, it makes the deepest impression upon the reader and has received the homage of generations of our countrymen.

On the contrary, the poetry of the second period is dominated by quite a different set of ideas. In the terminology of Hindi critics it is known as *Riti* poetry, poetry of *Rasa* and *Alankara*. It is a wholly artificial creation. Its main interest is *Sringara* (love) and its chief aim the exemplification of varieties of figures of speech. Its love is not the human passion which moves the heart of an individual particular man or woman, nor the emotion which lifts us above the tyranny of here and now, but a psychologized, classified, laboratory object lying on the table of a dissecting scientist.

The great masters of verse of the latter half of the 17th and the 18th century were engaged largely in the production of poetry of this type.



Among them were such magic workers as Chintamani Tripathi, Mati Ram, Bhushan, Bihari Lal, Dev, Pritam, Padmakar, Ghananand and others. The nauseous subtleties of their *nakh-sikh* and *naik-naika-bhed-varnan* are amazing. They have attained the limits of ingenuity and exhausted the possibilities of verbal skill over their descriptions of all parts of woman's body and the nuances of moods of woman's passion. At its best it excels the cut of the jeweller who cunningly shapes his precious stones to fit the golden ring which will adorn the bewitching fingers of some great beauty. They shine and glitter and dazzle by their sheer artistry. They please and even exhilarate, but they have not in them the life-giving ambrosia which heals lacerated hearts and quenches human thirst. It will not move anyone to goodness or greatness.

The tendencies shown by Urdu and Hindi in the two periods of the middle ages are similar. But that is as it should be. The literature may be in two languages, but it is the literature of the people of India, and they had common experiences which united them in heart and intellect. They responded to the mysterious call which filled them with an eager enthusiasm to conquer the world—inward and outward. When the impulse weakened, their mental horizon was

overshadowed by dark clouds through which they glimpsed shapes of ghostly monsters which frightened them and laid a palsy upon their souls. But for better and for worse, in good weather and bad, destiny had linked their lives in common bonds, and in whatever they did, thought or spoke they exhibited a common mind.



**SOME MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT  
HINDUSTANI**



When in the beginning of the 19th century, at the Fort William College, Calcutta, John Bothwick Gilchrist brought together Lallu Lal, Sadal Misra, Mir Amman, Mir Bahadur Ali, Haidar Bakhsh Haidari, Kazim Ali Jawan, Mazhar Ali Khan Wila, Nihal Chand, Sher Ali Afsos and others, and set them to make translations from Persian and Braj Bhasha, the problem of the name, character, standard and style of the language selected for employment was posed. Throughout the 19th century, the problem continued to draw attention, and in some decades the discussion raged with great vehemence. In the sixties and seventies, John Beames and F. S. Growse carried on a regular debate in the learned journals. Raja Shiva Prasad Sitara-i-Hind supported Beames who pleaded for the maintenance of the Persian and Arabic elements in the language : but Raja Lakshman Singh opposed him, agreeing with Growse that Sanskritisms should replace these elements. It is of interest to note that the Christian missionaries had not a little to do in emphasizing this

tendency. Sir G. A. Grierson, the universally acknowledged master of Indian philology, remarks in his *Linguistic Survey of India*, Vol. IX, Part I :

Unfortunately, the most powerful English influence has during this period been on the side of the Sanskritists. This Sanskritized Hindi has been largely used by missionaries, and translations of the Bible have been made into it. The few native writers who have stood up for the use of Hindi undefiled have had small success in the face of so potent an example of misguided effort.

Since the beginning of the 20th century the discussion has again assumed an acute form. Thus, this problem about which serious argument has proceeded for nearly a century and a half, is neither ephemeral nor unimportant. In fact its solution involves consequences of great practical significance. It is therefore necessary that it should be discussed without undue passion and, so far as possible, in a non-partizan spirit.

Before considering the merits of the question and stating the points of difference between the parties to the discussion, it appears to me necessary that the names which we use should be clearly defined, as, in my opinion, a great deal of misunderstanding is due to lack of clarity in this matter. A number of names have been used in

this connection ; among them are *Bhasha*, *Hindvi*, *Hindi*, *Hindustani* ; *Zaban-i-Dehnavi*, *Khari Boli*, *Madhyadesh ki Boli* ; *Rekhta*, *Zabani Urdu*, *Mualla*, *Urdu*. Of these names *Hindi*, *Hindustani* and *Urdu* are more important than others, and, in fact, controversy is now largely confined to their employment.

Let us take the name *Hindi* first. As every student of Indian philology knows, the name *Hindi* or *Hindvi* has been used in a number of diverse senses. Three of the most important are listed below :

(1) *Hindi* or *Hindvi* has been used to denote generally things Indian as distinguished from things non-Indian. This usage goes back to the earliest period of Muslim contact with India, and gave rise to the name of the Indo-Aryan dialect which the Muslims began to employ when they settled down in and around Lahore and Delhi. Here are some illustrations of this use. In 1228, Muhammad Aufr compiled an anthology of poems in which he mentions one Khwaja Masud Saad Salman and attributes to him a *Diwan* composed in *Hindvi*. In the reign of Alauddin Khilji (1295-1315), Fakhruddin Mubarak Ghaznavi compiled a dictionary in which he gives the



*Hindi* equivalents of Persian words. Amir Khusrau, who died in 1325, uses the terms *Hindvi* and *Hindi*. Shah Miranji Shamsul-Ushshaq, who died in 1495, calls the language of his composition *Hindi*. In the Deccan the name Hindi was commonly used along with the name Dakhini. Nusrati, who was a poet of the court of Ali Adil Shah II of Bijapur (1656-1673), speaks of his *Hindi* verses. When the Mughal court became the patron of the poetry which the Deccan had developed, the poets of Delhi also used the name Hindi for the language they used. Numerous illustrations of this use can be found in the works of poets commencing from Shah Hatim and coming down to Ghalib, and of prose writers from the earliest times to Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan. Hindi in this usage is thus identical with what came to be known as Urdu.

(2) The second use of the term Hindi is to denote a group of dialects which belong to what Grierson calls the Tertiary Prakrits, or Dr. S. K. Chatterji calls 'new Indo-Aryan languages.' The region in which they have prevailed extends roughly from the meridian of Sirhind in the West to that of Benares in the East, and from the Himalayan Terai in the North to the watershed of the Narbada in the South. They are the dialects of the ancient Madhyadesha or Midlands

and of the ancient northern and southern Kosala. They comprise the two linguistic families known as Western Hindi and Eastern Hindi. The name Hindi thus includes the following well-recognized dialects : i. Bundeli; ii. Kanauji; iii. Braj Bhasha; iv. Bangru; v. Hindustani (Grierson) or Khari Boli (tradition and Bharatendu Harishchandra) or Dehlavi (Sheikh Bajan and Amir Khusrau); vi. Avadhi; vii. Bagheli; and viii. Chhattisgarhi. Some scholars add to these eight, Rajasthani (Pts. Surya Karan Pareek and Narottam Das Swami) and Magahi (Rahula Sankrityayana). In this sense Hindi tends to stand for all the spoken dialects of Northern India.

(3) In the third place the name Hindi is specifically used for the modern language which is the literary form of the speech known by the names, Hindustani, Khari Boli or Dehlavi. Phonetically and morphologically, modern Hindi is distinct from the other sister speeches included in the groups of Western Hindi and Eastern Hindi and identical with Urdu.

The name Urdu for Hindi (usage 1) was probably first used by Mushafi. Mir in his anthology *Nikatush-Shuara* written in 1752, uses the expression *Zaban-i-Urdu-i-Mualla*. The name

occurs in Qaim's *Makhzan-i-Nikat* (1754). Baqar Agah, a poet of the Deccan, uses the term Urdu in 1772, as does Ali Ibrahim Khan, the author of *Tadhkira-e-Gulzar-i-Ibrahim*, in 1782. Ata Husain Tahsin, the author of *Nau Tarz-i-Murassa* (1770 or 1797), speaks of the Zaban-i-Urdu-i-Mualla. Mir Amman calls the language of his book, *Bagh-o Bahar* (compiled in 1801), Urdu. In the 18th century the name gained popularity and today it signifies the language which is the literary form of the speech known by the names Hindustani, Khari Boli or Dehlavi. Phonetically and morphologically, it is identical with modern Hindi. Its difference is confined to its loan words.

The name Zaban-i-Hindustan occurs in the writings of Wajahi (1635), in the history compiled by Ferishta (b. 1590), and in the *Badshah Nama* of Abdul Hamid Lahori (d. 1654). This name for the language was thus quite well known in the 16th and 17th centuries, and was adopted by the Europeans who travelled in India at this time. Thus Terry (1616) and Fryer (1673) called it 'Indostan.' Amaduzzi refers to the manuscript of a lexicon *Linguae Indostanicae* (1704), and Ketelaer wrote the first grammar and vocabulary of *Lingua Hindostanica* about 1715.

The term Hindustani obtained currency in the 18th century. When Mir Amman composed the *Bagh-o-Bahar* in 1801, he deliberately set himself to use *theth* Hindustani. Gilchrist used the name Hindustani in the title of his books, *e. g.*, *Angrezi Hindustani Dictionary*, and Garcin de Tassy lectured in Paris on the history of 'Hindouie' and 'Hindoustanie' (Hindvi and Hindustani). The name Hindustani has been used for Khari Boli. It has also been used as a synonym for Urdu by many writers, and for Modern Hindi by some.

Grierson's definitions may be reproduced here to clarify the position :

Hindustani is primarily the language of the Upper Gangetic Doab, and is also the *lingua franca* of India, capable of being written in both Persian and Deva-Nagari characters, and without purism, avoiding alike the excessive use of either Persian or Sanskrit words when employed for literature. The name Urdu can then be confined to that special variety of Hindustani in which Persian words are of frequent occurrence.....and similarly, Hindi can be confined to the form of Hindustani in which Sanskrit words abound.

Hindustani is thus no new-fangled name, invented to replace Hindi and Urdu, but a well-recognized and old established term for the speech which is the common basis of its two divergent forms, Hindi and Urdu.

Misconception about the name has created curious misunderstandings about the language itself. Even professed historians of language and literature have fallen into mistakes concerning the origin and development of Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani. These mistakes are due either to ignorance of the literature in its different forms, or to the mixing up of the three meanings of the term Hindi given above, especially the second and third. When some people speak about the development of Hindi they fail to take note of the fact that the history of Hindi is distinct from the history of languages like Rajasthani, Braj Bhasha and Avadhi ; and they equally ignore the fact that a great deal is common to the history of Hindi and Urdu.

Hindustani or Khari Boli, which developed from one of the branches of the new Indo-Aryan dialects, has a continuous history from the time (somewhere about the 12th century) that it separated itself from the other midland dialects. As everyone knows, this basic dialect was and continues to be the spoken language of the people inhabiting the Upper Gangetic Doab and the neighbouring region. This spoken language was adopted by the Muslims when they settled down in and about Delhi at the end of the 12th century. From the tongues of the new speakers

a number of new sounds passed into the sound system of Khari Boli which was a purely Indo-Aryan speech. The morphology of Khari Boli also underwent slight and rather unimportant changes, and it began to absorb loan words from the languages of the Muslim conquerors. This modified speech became the vehicle of literary expression. Amir Khusrau is said to have employed it in the 14th century, but, in the absence of any documents of his time, the matter is not free from doubt. In the Deccan, however, the speech became the medium of both prose and poetry and here a rich literature grew up between the 14th and 18th centuries. The language used in the literature is replete with *tadbhavas* (indigenous words), and the literature is not encumbered with exclusively foreign elements. The authors of the Deccan very justifiably considered themselves writers of Hindi, the name which they adopted for the language which they used in their composition in prose and verse.

In Northern India the situation was very curious. Although Khari Boli or Hindustani was a northern speech, it mainly developed as a literary language in the Deccan, for there is scarcely any important independent work in the language which may be assigned to a time

preceding the 17th century. The reason appears to be this. When Khari Boli emerged as a language fit for polite speech and literary expression in the 13th century, it had to face the rivalry of Rajasthani which was the popular literary language of Northern India in that period, the language in which Jaina works were written and Narpati Nalha and other poets wrote their heroic and other poems.

The rise of the Bhakti movement in the 15th century led to the establishment of three sects—Nirakar Bhakti, Krishna Bhakti and Ram Bhakti. The saints of the first school, like Kabir, Nanak, Dadu, employed Khari Boli or Hindustani along with other dialects to popularize their faith; the propagators of the second sect, Surdas, Nand Das, etc., employed Braj Bhasha in their hymns and songs exclusively; the leaders of the third sect headed by Goswami Tulasidas used Avadhi in their compositions.

Thus the main currents of literature in the 15th and succeeding centuries flowed in two channels, Braj Bhasha and Avadhi. Not only did Hindu writers use them; Muslim poets also made them their own. Rahim, Raskhan, Raslin are as well known in the history of Braj Bhasha poetry as any Hindu poets; and every-

one recognizes that but for Malik Muhammad Jayasi's foundational work, Avadhi might never have produced the glorious structure of *Rama-charita manas*.

During this period Modern Hindi or Sanskritized Hindustani lived only a furtive existence. Khari Boli was, of course, the living medium of conversation, but so far as literary work was concerned, Hindi (Persianized Hindustani), Braj Bhasha and Avadhi occupied the field, and continued to do so till the end of the 18th century. Some recent writers on Hindi literature have sought to prove that Modern Hindi had a literature in centuries preceding the 18th, but these attempts are hardly successful. A 16-page pamphlet bearing the title *Chand Chhand Barnan ki Mahima* written by Ganga Bhatt in the 16th century is supposed to be the first specimen of modern Hindi prose, and, *longo intervallo*, in the 17th century comes Jatmal's *Gora Badal Ki Bat*. The first, however, is written in mixed Braj Bhasha and Khari Boli, and the second has been proved to belong to the 19th century, and is the prose rendering of the Rajasthani original in verse. It is said that there are two or three other pieces, dated the 18th century, like *Man-dovar ka Varnan*, *Chakatta ki Patsiyahi ki Parampara*, in which Khari Boli has been used. But



it is scarcely possible to treat them as works of real literary value at all comparable with contemporary works of prose in Hindi (Persianized Hindustani), Braj and Avadhi.

Throughout these centuries, Hindi (Persianized Hindustani) and not Modern Hindi (Sanskritized Hindustani) was the *lingua franca* of India, and the speech of polite society, whether Hindu or Muslim. So late as 1871, Bharatendu Harishchandra stated in the preface of his book on the origin of the Agarwal community, 'the speech of the Agarwals, of all their men and women, is Khari Boli or Urdu; (*in ki boli stri aur purush sab ki, khari boli arthat Urdu hai*). What was true of the Agarwal community was equally true of other communities of Northern India.

It was only at the beginning of the 19th century that Modern Hindi (Sanskritized Hindustani) started its career. Munshi Sada Sukh Lal Niyaz, who on retirement from the service of the East India Company settled down in Allahabad, made a free translation of *Srimad Bhagavata* and gave it the title of 'Sukh Sagar.' About the same time Insha Allah Khan composed 'Rani Ketki ki Kahani.' Then Sadal Misra and Lallu Lal were directed by John Gil-

Christ and the English professors of the Fort William College to create a literary medium for the Hindus which would take the place of Hindi (Persianized Hindustani). Mr. F. E. Keay, the author of *A History of Hindi Literature* in the Heritage of India series says : "Urdu however, had a vocabulary borrowed largely from the Persian and Arabic languages, which were specially connected with Muhammadanism. A literary language for Hindi-speaking people which could commend itself more to Hindus was very desirable, and the result was obtained by taking Urdu and expelling from it words of Persian and Arabic origin, and substituting for them words of Sanskrit or Hindi origin." Again : "The Hindi of Lallu Lal was really a new literary dialect." Pandit Chandra Dhar Sharma Guleri wrote a series of articles in the *Nagari Pracharini Patrika* in 1921 (1978 Samvat) on old Hindi. He says :

Mere kahneka tatparya yeh tha ki Hinduon ki rachi hui purani kavita jo milti hai woh Brajbhasha ya purvi Baiswari, Avadhi, Rajasthani, Gujarati adi hi main milti hai, arthat "Pari boli" main pai jati hai. Khari Boli ya Vartman Hindi ke arambh kal ke gadya aur padya ko dekhkar yehi jan parta hai ki Urdu rachna men Farsi Arbi Tatsam ya Tadbhavon ko milakar Sanskrit ya Hindi Tatsam aur Tadbhava rakhne se Hindi bana li gai hai.

M. Jules Bloch, the author of *La formation de la Language Marathe*, supports the statements of Keay and Guleri. According to him :

Lallu Lal, sous l'inspiration du Dr. Gilchrist, changea tout cela en écrivant son célèbre *Prem Sagar*, dont les parties en prose étaient en somme de l'ourdou dont les mots Persans auraient été remplacés partout par des mots Indo-aryens.....Le nouveau dialecte donna une 'langue franque' aux Hindous." (Lallu Lal under the inspiration of Dr. Gilchrist, changed all that by writing the famous *Prem Sagar*, whose prose portions are on the whole Urdu, from which Persian words have been throughout replaced by Indo-Aryan words... ..The new dialect gave a *lingua franca* to the Hindus).

Some recent Hindi writers have protested against this account of the origin of Modern Hindi, but so far as I can see, their protests do not seem to hold much water. It appears to me that a dispassionate study of the origin and growth of Modern Hindi (Sanskritized Hindustani) can lead only to one conclusion : namely, that the language is only 135 years old, and perhaps not even that. For although Sadak Misra and Lallu Lal heralded the dawn of modern Hindi, it proved to be a false dawn, as darkness descended upon Hindi again and was not lifted till after the Mutiny of 1857, when Raja Shiva Prasad, Raja Lakshman Singh, Babu Harishchandra and others lifted it once

for all and ushered in the true dawn of Modern Hindi literature.

To avoid misunderstandings, let me state the following propositions, which, I believe, will be regarded by every scientific student of our language as true:

(1) Magahi, an eastern member of the new Indo-Aryan speech group, has a literature going back to the 9th century.

(2) Rajasthani, a western member of the same group, had an abundance of literature from the 12th to the 19th centuries, but has now ceased to be a literary language.

(3) Braj Bhasha, also a western branch of the same group, flourished as a literary language from the 15th to 19th century. It ceased to be the language of prose after the rise of Modern Hindi, and is now receding into the background as a vehicle of poetry.

(4) Avadhi, an eastern branch, came into prominence in the 15th century, but never acquired the same popularity as Braj Bhasha. It is no longer regarded as a literary language.

(5) Other branches of Western and Eastern Hindi were used as instruments of literary expression from the 14th to the 19th century, but they have all ceased to be so used now.

(6) Khari Boli or Hindustani has two literary forms. The earlier form called Hindi by its users, and now known as Urdu, has a continuous history from the 14th century to the present day. The second form, known as Modern Hindi, came into literary use at the beginning of the 19th century and has made rapid progress since the Mutiny.

A third set of misconceptions exists in regard to the relation between Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani. Now there should be no doubt in anybody's mind that the three names indicate one and the same language. In order to determine the relationship of languages, it is necessary to resort to a comparative examination of their (a) phonetic features, (b) morphological or syntactical features, and (c) vocabularies. But among these three elements the first two are of primary importance, and the third of secondary importance only. All writers on philology agree that the grammatical structure of a language is the most stable part of it, which remains intact from generation to generation in all its progres-

sive transformations; that the phonetic system, while less stable than the morphological, has a certain fixity; but that the vocabulary of a language is subject to brusque and capricious innovations. A. Meillet, one of the greatest living authorities of language, says :

La prononciation et la grammaire forment des systemes fermes ; toutes les parties de chacun de ces systemes sont liees les unes aux autres. Le systeme phonetique et le systeme morphologique se pretent donc peu a recevoir 'des emprunts'...au contraire, les mots ne constituent pas un systeme ; tout au plus formentils de petits groupes.....chaque mot existe pour ainsi dire isolement.....C'est donc avant tout par la persistance de la prononciation et de la grammaire que se traduit linguistiquement la volonte continue de parler une certaine langue qui definit la 'parente de langues'. (Pronunciation and grammar constitute fixed systems ; all the parts of each of these systems are interlinked. The phonetic and morphological systems are little disposed to receive 'loans' ... on the contrary, words do not form a system ; at most they form small groups : ... each word exists, so to speak, in isolation.....Thus the continuous desire to speak a certain language, which defines the 'relationship of tongue,' manifests itself linguistically above all through the persistence of pronunciation and grammar.

Thus, although the Persian language is abundantly stocked with Arabic words, still it

belongs to the Aryan group. English remains a Teutonic tongue, in spite of large Latin elements and the difference in the styles of those who lean towards an Anglo-Saxon vocabulary and those who prefer Johnsonese does not create two languages. Nearer home, Sindhi and Punjabi illustrate the same principles. They have borrowed numerous words from Persian and Arabic, yet their phonetics and grammar proclaim them to be Indo-Aryan.

Vocabulary depends on the caprices of history, of which the Great War furnishes the latest illustration. In England, the German names of aristocratic houses were abandoned in favour of English names, so much so that the House of Hanover became the House of Windsor. French, which is fastidious in the adoption of foreign words, opened its arms wide to receive English words, like 'gentleman', 'sport'. The Russians expelled the German suffix 'burg' from the names of their cities and substituted the Slavic 'grad'. Thus St. Petersburg became Petrograd, and, when the wheel of fortune laid Peter's dynasty low, Petrograd was transformed into Leningrad. Historic causes, national attractions and repulsions and other social factors continually affect vocabulary.

What do we find in the light of these principles ? The sound system of Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani is identical. Each contains the same number of three classes of sounds: old Indo-Aryan vowels and consonants, new Indo-Aryan vowels and consonants, Semitic sounds. This fact is admitted, sometimes grudgingly, by the grammarians, *e.g.*, Pt. Kamta Prasad Guru in his *Hindi Vyakarana*, Dr. Dharendra Varma in his *Hindi Bhasha ka Itihas*, M. Abdul Haq in his *Qawaid-i-Urdu*. The phonetic system identifies Hindi, Urdu and Hindustani, but differentiates them from other Aryan and Semitic languages *e.g.*, Sanskrit, Braj Bhasha, Avadhi, Persian and Arabic.

Again, the grammar of the three is more or less identical. "There is no difference of importance between the declensions and conjugations used in Urdu and Hindi respectively." (Grierson). In the opinion of J. Beames, "it betrays, therefore, a radical misunderstanding of the whole bearing of the question, and of the whole science of philology, to speak of Urdu and Hindi as two distinct languages." (*A Comparative Grammar of the Modern Aryan Languages*.)

In regard to vocabulary the identity is not complete. The vocabulary of a language



consists of original or indigenous words of the spoken dialect, loan words or words borrowed from foreign languages, and compounds and derivatives. So far as Urdu and Hindi are concerned, they have numerous words of the first class which are common, *e.g.*, almost all the verbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions and interjections. So far as nouns and adjectives are concerned, in addition to their common indigenous, both have borrowed from Sanskrit, Prakrit, Persian and Arabic, besides other languages. The exact measure of the loan is not known, as exhaustive dictionaries drawn up on rigorously scientific lines do not exist. M. Sayyid Ahmad Dehlavi, the author of the famous dictionary, *Farhang-i-Asafia*, has analysed the words collected by him. The total number of words is 54,000; the number of loan words from Arabic is 7584, from Persian 6041, from Sanskrit 554, from English 500, and from others 181. The remainder are indigenous. If we turn to the pages of the Hindi dictionary known as *Hindi Shabda Sagar* and compiled under the auspices of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha, we find that almost every one of these 7584 Arabic and 6041 Persian words is included in it. This is a clear recognition of the fact that even as regards loan words the difference between Hindi

and Urdu is not so great as some people imagine. So far as compounds and derivatives are concerned, the methods of combination and the use of vocables (affixes) in forming derivatives are to a considerable extent common, as a reference to the grammars of the two languages shows.

While it is necessary to point out the similarity between the vocabularies of Urdu and Hindi, one must recognize that the differences between them are quite large, and that if proper measures are not taken they may increase. The writers of Hindi and Urdu are divided between two schools. One school considers it necessary to borrow extensively from the classical languages ; the other wishes to limit the quantity of such loans. They use similar arguments for their choice. For instance, the Hindi writers of the first school base the desirability of the extensive use of Sanskrit *tatsams* and the rejection of Perso-Arabic words on the following grounds .

(a) Hindi is an Indo-Aryan dialect having close relations with other Indo-Aryan dialects like Bengali, Marathi, Gujratī. It is natural for them all to borrow from the same parent language which is Sanskrit. The more Sanskrit

*tatsams* are used and the more Sanskrit roots are employed in technical terms, the nearer will they come and the easier will it be for speakers of the sister dialects to understand and use Hindi. Hindi will thus have a chance of becoming the inter-provincial language of India.

(b) Words carry about them a cultural atmosphere. Sanskrit words are redolent of the aroma of ancient Indian culture, while Perso-Arabic words have an alien reference and significance. Therefore an Indian language should prefer words of the first class to those of the second.

These arguments are weighty ; nay more, they strike a sympathetic chord in the heart. They should therefore be examined with earnest care.

Those who favour Arabic as a source of loan words, technical or otherwise, advance arguments which are similar. According to them, Arabic is the language of the sacred scriptures of a great community and enshrines traditions which are dear to it. Again, Arabic is a living modern tongue which is rapidly assimilating the sciences of the West and there-

fore provides a suitable source of terms required in modern thought. It is fairly extensively studied in all parts of India by the religious-minded and its sounds and phrases are familiar to a wide circle of people. It has continuously exercised influence upon Hindustani or Khari Boli, of which the phonetic and grammatical system and vocabulary are proofs. In the past, great writers of Braj Bhasha like Surdas and Avadhi like Tulasidas felt no compunction in using Arabic words in their songs and poems ; in fact thousands of such words have become a part of the language, to which the *Hindi Shabda Sagar* is a witness.

None can say that no value need be attached to these arguments. But after giving the most careful consideration to them one cannot resist the conclusion that between these divergent views the middle course is the wisest.

Against the Sanskritization of Hindustani voices have been raised, not only by such eminent European linguists as J. Beames and Sir G. A. Grierson, but also by Indian scholars like Raja Shiva Prasad, Pt. Bal Krishna Bhatt, MM. Pt. Giridhar Sharma, Pt. Padma Singh Sharma, and Pt. Ayodhya Singh Upadhyaya.

I will quote only the opinion of Pt. Giridhar Sharma here. He says :

Sanskritmaya bana kar apne Bangal, Maharashtra adi men Hindi ka prachar shighr kar liya, kintu woh kewal shikshiton ki bhasha ban gai, sarva sadharan use bilkul na samajh sake, to kya labh hua ? Labh kya bari hani ho-gai ... Hindi bhasha me Hindi bhasha ke shabd hi pratham lene chahiye, phir jab unse avashyakta puri na ho, tab Sanskrit bhasha se saral shabd lene chahiye.

On the other side, scholars like Syed Ali Bilgrami, Maulvi Wahidud Din Salim and Maulvi Abdul Haq have attempted to moderate the zeal of the Arabicists. M. Wahidud Din pointed out in his book on the formation of technical terms (*Waz-i- Istalahat*) :

Hamko is dhoke se bachna chahiye aur Hindi zaban ke alfaz wa haruf se, jo hamari zaban ki fitrat men dakhil hain, nak bhaun chadhana nahin chahiye. Ham jis tarah. Arbi Farsi se istalahat lete hain, isi tarah Hindi se bhi betakalluf waze istalahat men kam lena chahiye.

Unfortunately these groups have been working in isolation from one another, and therefore their advice and warning have gone unheeded. The result is that Hindi and Urdu are fast becoming the jargon of the learned, remote from the speech of the common people. They are creating barriers of unintelligibility between neighbours, instead of providing them with a medium of mutual

understanding, the circle of their usefulness is being narrowed, the sweep of their popularity limited.

Surely the argument regarding cultural affinities is over-strained. Culture is an affair of values, spiritual, moral, social and aesthetical. These values arise partly out of men's struggles with nature whereby groups sustain themselves, and partly from the inner conflicts whereby they win self-directing unity. Thus physical and psychological factors determine culture. We have, therefore, regional cultures, French, English, Chinese, Persian ; or class cultures, aristocratic, bourgeois, proletarian. We speak of an Indian culture ; but is there any meaning in an Urdu or a Hindi culture ? The Urdu (Persianized Hindustani) language is an instrument which has been used in the past for disseminating Hindu religious ideas ; it is being used for that purpose today ; and, so far as one can see, will be used in future to do the same. Similarly, Hindi (Sanskritized Hindustani) has given service to the Muslims. And why not ? If Chinese, Persian, Pushto, Javanese, Avadhi, Bengali and a host of tongues having no relationship with Arabic can be used as media for speech and writing embodying Muslim religious ideas, why should the employment of a number of Sanskrit

words in Hindustani spell disaster and ruin to religion ?

Indian culture is a modern growth to which every community inhabiting this great land makes its contribution ; its ideals of truth and worth have a national reference transcending the particularisms of provinces, races, creeds. The physical and social conditions in which this culture is taking shape are different from what they were in the past, and our struggles, inner and outer, are no longer the same. A transvaluation of old values is going on amidst us, needing a new interpretation and a new expression. It is this growing consciousness of a common culture which must inspire, more and more, the literary creations of India, whatever the idiom used, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi or Hindustani.

Let us then not lay too much stress on the differing cultural atmospheres of Urdu and Hindi. On the other hand, let us consider the practical consequences of a policy which inspires coiners of technical terms like the following :

*English*.—1. Abscissa, 2. Absolute Term, 3. Accelerate, 4. Algebra, 5. Alternando, 6. Antecedent, etc.

*Hindi*.—1. Bhuj, 2. Param Pad, 3. Gati vridhhi karna, 4. Bijganit, 5. Ekantar nishpatti, 6. Purva pad, etc.

*Urdu*.—1. Fasla or Maqtua, 2. Raqam Mutlaq, 3. Isra-i-harakat, 4. Jabr-o-muqabala, 5. Tabdil, 6. Mukaddam, etc.

I have taken these from the dictionaries of technical terms issued by the Nagari Pracharini Sabha, Benares, and the Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu, Aurangabad. They are a sample of the terms used in Algebra, and they show what a wide gulf is being created between the two forms of Hindustani by their adoption. So long as the education of Indian youth was carried on through the medium of English, it did not matter whether there were two sets of technical terms or one in the Indian language, but now that education at the secondary stage is being imparted in our own language and we are moving towards the stage when the highest education will be given through it, the question of duplication of terms assumes great importance, especially in North India outside Bengal, where the devotees of Urdu and Hindi live intermingled. If Urdu and Hindi become unintelligible to the pupils, the result will be that teaching will have to be duplicated in schools, which will inevitably either



reduce efficiency or increase expenditure. In the Universities these difficulties will be magnified even more enormously. The problem of learning, research and dissemination of knowledge will be greatly complicated. Shall we have two sets of teachers in each University, one for Urdu and one for Hindi, or two universities in each centre?

What, again, will be the language of the legislatures and of the government ? In the Punjab they are debating the question today, and soon we shall have to consider it in the U. P., Bihar, and lastly, at Delhi. Then there is the question of public amusement and instruction, radio, cinema and theatre, and that of inter-provincial trade and intercourse. What Indian language will take the place of English ? For I take it that we are all agreed that English cannot possibly serve those purposes in future.

It seems to me a tremendous pity that merely because of the loan words in the language we are letting the two forms of the same language to drift and we are making the solution of practical educational and administrative problems more and more difficult.

Hindustani, as I have tried to show above, is no artificial speech. It has existed these thousand years as a distinct language. It has a consider-

able literature, for I include almost all that has been written in the Deccan whether in prose or in poetry as part of Hindustani. In the North, in spite of the efforts of enthusiasts for foreign imitations, there is a good deal of poetry which is written in simple, common, everyday speech. Illustrations could be found in the Diwans of any period. Hali's *Munajat-i-Bewa* and *Barkha Rut* are extremely good examples of an Urdu which both in sentiment and in idiom are wholly Hindustani. Modern Hindi also furnishes illustrations of how Hindustani should be written. I shall content myself with putting forward the name of only one author, but one who stands unrivalled as a creative artist in the history of modern Hindi Literature. I refer to M. Premchand.

The fact of the matter is that so far as literary composition is concerned modern Hindi and Urdu are merely two styles of Hindustani, while in regard to scientific treatises their difference is confined to loan words alone. It appears to me that it is not impossible to remove this difference, provided there is a will to do so. Of the desirability of this course I am personally fully convinced, and I make a few suggestions for the consideration of those who desire that the gulf between the two should be bridged.

(1) Measures should be adopted to encourage the study of modern Hindi by Urdu speaking people, and of Urdu by Hindi speaking people.

(2) A dictionary of words used by standard authors of Urdu and Hindi should be compiled.

(3) A grammar on modern lines giving the analysis of the phonetic and morphological systems of Hindi and Urdu and a generous treatment of the rules of combination and derivation should be drawn up:

(4) A dictionary of technical terms for the use of Hindi and Urdu authors should be compiled.

(5) An English-Hindustani dictionary for the use of translators should be compiled.

(6) Anthologies of prose and verse containing literary pieces written in easy Urdu and Hindi should be put together.

Of these suggestions, some could be carried out by individuals or associations, but others would require the help of the government. For instance, measures to promote the study of Urdu and Hindi could be enforced at schools by the education department alone. Again, a dictionary of technical terms could not be compiled without an agreement between Hindi and Urdu scholars of the regions where these langu-

ages are in use. As this question affects the educational advancement of a number of provinces and states, it will be difficult to tackle it successfully without the help of their governments. But the practical issues involved are of such importance as to justify their intervention. In the absence of an authority like the Academy in France, a committee consisting of representatives of governments, universities, literary and scientific bodies, could be appointed to consider the specific problems of common technical terms and give an authoritative solution.

If an agreement is reached on the question of words required for scientific and technical purposes, the sting of the quarrel between Hindi and Urdu will have been removed, the difficulties created by the existence of two languages in the same region will have been smoothed out, and Hindi and Urdu will then tend to merge into one, as the medium of both speech and literature.



## **HINDI AND URDU**



In the issue of the *Leader* of March 23, 1942, were published extracts from the speech of Pandit Amaranatha Jha delivered at a meeting of the Suhrid Sangh at Muzaffarpur, containing his views on the question of the national language for India. The problem is of great importance, and I hope you will give some space in your columns to views which are different from those advocated at Muzaffarpur, so that all sides of the case may come before the public. I shall consider the arguments advanced in the speech *seriatim*.

Prof. Jha says that "Hindi alone can be the national language of India and occupy this place of honour as it is derived from Sanskrit, draws its inspiration from the country, enshrines the culture of the country, and is allied to all the major languages of the country." The first point which he makes in this statement is that Hindi is derived from Sanskrit. The statement is doubly wrong, wrong in what it asserts and in what it impliedly denies. Hindi, the modern



high Hindi used by most writers of Hindi prose and many writers of verse at present, which, according to Prof. Jha, ought to be the national language of India, is not derived from Sanskrit. In fact no modern Indian language is derived from Sanskrit, for Sanskrit is a stereotyped literary language which has not been allowed by grammarians to grow and multiply and bring forth children. Hindi, as any text-book on Indo-Aryan philology will tell you, has developed from an Apabhramsha of Saurseni Prakrit, a dialect spoken in the Madhyadesha for many centuries. The Saurseni Prakrit itself is a daughter of one of the old Indo-Aryan dialects spoken in Northern India in pre-Buddhist times. The old Indo-Aryan Prakrit was comprised of a number of dialects, one of which began to be used for literary purposes. The earliest literary form is known as Chhandas and is the medium of expression of the Vedas. In later times another literary language developed to which the name Sanskrit is given. Its rules were compiled by Panini and other grammarians, and it acquired a rigidity which has prevented its proliferation.

To assert then that Hindi is derived from Sanskrit is inaccurate. The implication that Urdu is not derived from the same Indo-Aryan sources as Hindi is also wrong. For, the fact is

that the source of Urdu is the same Apabhramsha, the same Saurseni Prakrit, the same old Indo-Aryan dialect as gave rise to modern high Hindi.

So far as the origins are concerned, the two languages (?) stand on the same footing, and one cannot assume a higher place than the other. But it is then said that Hindi derives its inspiration from this country, and enshrines its culture. and the implication is that Urdu does not. This statement is one-sided and exaggerated. Urdu, it must be realized, is not the language of any people outside this country. Indians settled abroad use it and have taught its use to some of the inhabitants of their adopted countries, but apart from such speakers, Urdu is as indigenous to India as Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, or Tamil. Urdu was born in India ; it has been nurtured by Indians, both Hindus and Muslims ; its basic structure and phonetic and morphological system are Indian ; its superstructure is more catholic than that of Hindi, for its vocabulary contains words derived from the cultural environment of both Hindus and Muslims. The basis of Urdu is broader and less exclusive than that of Hindi, for it derives its inspiration from the culture of both communities and enshrines the traditions of both.

When people speak about Urdu they forget that there is scarcely any phase or aspect of Hindu life and thought which does not find expression through Urdu. We have translations of the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagwad Gita*, the *Smritis*, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, many *Puranas*, and the *Bhagwat* in Urdu ; there are many philosophic-religious and religious treatises in Urdu dealing with Hindu mythology, worship, pilgrimages, etc. Then on Hindu arts, especially music, we have numerous works in Urdu. A number of Sanskrit dramas, stories and poems have been embodied in Urdu works. Hindu sciences, mathematical and natural, are to be found in Urdu books. There is nothing surprising in this, for, till nearly the close of the 19th century, Urdu was recognized by most Hindus as their own language. Hindu poets and prose writers used Urdu as the vehicle of their thought, and many among the educated Hindus in North India read Urdu books both for information and for aesthetic satisfaction. In recent times Hindus, under the influence of revivalist and communalist tendencies, are gradually giving up Urdu, the demand for books of this type is diminishing and publishers do not find it profitable to bring them out. Even then if a reference is made to the Government Gazettes published

by the provincial governments, one will still find such books listed.

Urdu catered for the needs of the Hindus, and at the same time of course supplied to a much larger extent the needs of the Muslims. So far as creative literature is concerned, Urdu boasts of both Hindu and Muslim contributors. Numerous Hindu writers, from Wali Ram Wali of Shahjahan's time to the present day, have used Urdu as the medium of their sentiments and ideas. The narrow-mindedness of Muslim historians of Urdu literature has prevented the just appraisal of this contribution but the fact cannot be gainsaid. If more Hindus have not taken to Urdu, the fault is partly that of the Muslims themselves. An attitude of superiority in spite of the fact that many Muslim poets learnt to lip their numbers at the feet of Hindu masters of poetry, hurt the self-respect of many an aspirant to literary fame. Then the poison of revivalism and communalism, which entered the vitals of the two communities, has sharpened the differences between them. Although the Muslims monopolized political power during the middle ages, yet they did not consider it beneath their dignity to cultivate Braj Bhasha, Avadhi and other Indian languages. In fact they produced writers whose names will live as long as these

languages are studied. But they have shown less and less inclination to study the culture of their Hindu fellow-countrymen during recent times.

However that may be, the charge that Urdu literature breathes an alien atmosphere is very much exaggerated. It is true that much of Urdu literature is steeped in the traditions of Muslim community ; but the Muslim community is an Indian community and it is but natural that its longings, ideals and traditions should to some extent find expression in the literature produced by its members. It would be most unnatural if that were not so. The communities in India which profess faiths of non-Indian origin—the Parsis, the Christians and the Muslims— cannot be considered alien to India simply because they follow religions which are not indigenous. Those who think otherwise are the strongest supporters of schemes of India's partition.

Again, those who know Urdu literature in its totality and not merely in some of its aspects, know how cruelly wrong the charge of alienness is. Read the works of the Dakhini Urdu poets, especially their *masnavis*, *marsias* and allegorical poems ; or those of Sauda and Mir, their *masnavis*, *qasidas* and *marsias* ; or Mir Hasan's *Masnavi Sihrul Bayan* or Daya Shankar Nasim's *Gulzar-i-Nasim* ; or the *marsias* of Anis ; or the

poems of Nazir Akbarabadi; or the longer poems of modern writers like Azad, Hali, Sarur Jahanabadi, Akbar Allahabadi, Chakbast and many living poets; you will find that the atmosphere of Urdu poetry cannot be regarded as alien. Even when, as in *marzias*, the names of heroes and the scenes of their heroism are non-Indian, the background of sentiment, emotion and culture is Indian.

Again study Urdu prose like the early ethical novels of M. Nazir Ahmad, or Sarshar's masterpiece *Fisana-i-Azad*, or the short stories of Premchand, and you will not be able to maintain that Urdu literature is untrue to Indian life or ignores India's variegated cultural environment. If Shakespear's *Hamlet*, *Julius Caesar*, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Romco and Juliet*, *Othello*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Timon of Athens*, Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Simon Agonistes*, Byron's *Prisoner of Chillon*, Scott's *Quentin Durward* and *Talisman*, Lytton's *Rienzi* George Eliot's *Romola* and numerous works of translation from Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, Portuguese, German, Russian, Chinese, etc., are not regarded as alien to English literature, why should translations from Arabic and Persian into Urdu lay the latter open to the charge of breathing an alien

atmosphere ? There are innumerable references and allusions in English literature to Græek, Roman and Jewish traditions and historical incidents, and historical and mythological personages, yet we have never heard an outcry against them from the most fervent Anglophiles. Why, in the name of good sense, condemn Urdu because a section of the Indian people, whose religious affinities are not confined to the frontiers of India, make allusions to extra-Indian traditions ?

It is then said that Hindi 'is allied to all the major languages of India'. I do not wish to overdo the point; but the statement is obviously inaccurate. What about the Dravidian languages? Is not Urdu as much allied as Hindi to Punjabi ?

Having considered Prof. Jha's reasons for giving preference to Hindi over Urdu, let me pass on to his remarks about Hindustani. He seems to feel a peculiar delight in showering contempt upon Hindustani. He once dubbed it as a 'hybrid monster' ; he calls it now a 'funny' language. I wonder what is at the back of his mind. Surely there is no language in the world which is not hybrid. English which has borrowed unashamedly from almost every language in the world, ought to be given the first place

among hybrid monsters. Is Sanskrit a pure language? If so, What about the numerous Dravidian and Munda words which have entered it? Does not Weber in his history of Sanskrit literature point out a considerable number of Arabic astronomical terms which the Indian astronomical works in Sanskrit contain? Is Urdu with Indo-Aryan verbs and many Persian nouns not a hybrid? What about Hindi? Did not Tulasidas, Bihari Lal, Keshav and others employ Arabic and Persian words, and does not modern high Hindi contain loan words from English, French, Portuguese, Arabic, Persian, besides Dravidian, Munda and Chinese? Take Dakhini Urdu which was used as the medium of literature for nearly four hundred years; its writers and readers did not regard the use of Prakritisms and Persianisms in juxtaposition as funny. It is the case of some persons liking onions and some garlic, but some liking a mixture of both. Have those who like onions a right to abuse those who prefer garlic or a mixture of onions and garlic?

Let Prof. Jha be not so sure about the sympathies of the country towards Sanskritized Hindi. People of provinces where Hindi and Urdu are not spoken as mother-tongues want a *lingua franca* for the whole of India. They believe that



some form of the language spoken in the north by both Hindus and Muslims should serve the purpose. But they are not so certain about the specific form which should be adopted. Dr. S. K. Chatterji, the eminent linguist, advocated at one time a Hindi or Hindustani shorn of all its grammatical complexities, *e. g.* the gender of verbs etc. Sri M. Satyanarayan, one of the most ardent and indefatigable workers for the propagation of Hindi in the South, writing in the *Hindi Prachar Samachar*, the organ of the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, warns those who are anxious to fill Hindi with Sanskrit words. Says he : “If we have to accept a language which is filled with Sanskrit, or is dominated by Sanskrit, then we need not fix our gaze upon the languages of the North, for the languages (of Bengal, Maharashtra, and the South) are not so poor that they will go bankrupt in this matter of give and take. In this argument (for Sanskritisation) there is not that much of advantage as appears on the face of it, on the contrary there is certain likelihood of loss.”

Dr. Dharendra Varma some time ago commenting upon the demands of non-Hindi speaking provinces for the modification of the Hindi language said : “The truth is that the honour and temptation of becoming the national

language of India has thrown the speakers of Hindi into a delusion at present and they are either ignoring the real problems of their language or have lost the power of considering them from the right point of view." (Vina.)

Prof. Jha, in order to please the very few who will learn Hindi because it will be the language of inter-provincial intercourse in place of English, advocates its Sanskritization ; but he does not realize that in this process he is antagonizing the millions of Muslim neighbours of Hindus who live in the region extending from the Indus to the Kosi, from the Himalaya to the Satpura. Is the game worth the candle ?

Let me now examine the other points which have been made against Urdu. Says Prof. Jha: "The entire atmosphere of Urdu literature is non-Indian ; hardly a single Indian metre is in use in Urdu." I need not repeat what I have said about the Indianness of Urdu. But what about metre ? In the first place no specific metre is identified with any language, for in the development of literature metre frequently varies. The phenomenon is so well known that I need not elaborate on it. But let me draw attention to two literatures. English and Bengali. In English, as every student of its literature knows, experimenting with new forms

of verse has been the hobby of the poets of every new period. The most recent phase of this tendency is the use of what is known as 'sprung verse' which was brought into vogue by Gerard Hopkins during the last world war, and which is replacing the syllabic verse of Hardy and Bridges. In Bengali, besides the old *Matra-vritta* and *Akshara-vritta* metres, there is a third form known as the *Svara-vritta*. The first two are common to many northern Indian languages, but the last whose basis appears to be stress, is peculiar to Bengali. Some philologists think that its origin is non-Aryan.

Apart however from these considerations, let me point out that Urdu and Hindi are alike in the use of rimed verse, and, both are unlike Sanskrit, which is entirely unrimed. Again, Urdu has a considerable amount of songs whose rhythms make them indistinguishable from similar songs in Hindi. Although the problem of versification in Urdu and Hindi has not been studied scientifically, I make bold to say that Urdu prosody is not entirely different from Hindi. Anyone can satisfy himself on this score by comparing the Hindi *Chaupai* with the Urdu *Bahr-i-Mutaqarib*.

Then in support of his contention that the atmosphere of Urdu is entirely non-Indian, Prof. Jha draws attention to the list of words in the

well-known dictionary *Farhang-i-Asafia*. I am constrained to say that the manner in which the statement is made is very misleading. Prof. Jha does not state that the dictionary lists more than 54,000 words and that of them 13,500 are Persian and Arabic; i. e. the proportion of the foreign words to the total is just one-fourth. How can anyone venture to say on the basis of this proportion that Urdu is non-Indian?

In the end let me say that no attempt to prove that Hindi and Urdu are two different languages has the least chance of success. In spite of Messrs. Purushottamdas Tandon, Sampurnanand and the prominent men of letters of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan foregathered at Abohar, the fact is indisputable that Urdu and Hindi are only two literary styles or forms of one spoken language. Nor will the attempt to prove that Braj Bhasha, Avadhi and Modern Hindi are identical find any support from the science of language, whatever popular writers may assert. Identities of languages cannot be based upon the ground of glossic similarities.

If the extremists among the writers of Urdu and Hindi, who affect styles burdened with classical borrowings, are in the majority today, that does not mean that they will continue forever to be in the ascendant. When writers of

Urdu, under the influence of misplaced notions of phonetic and linguistic purism, rejected numerous good, simple, effective words of common speech, and laid down rules for pruning the vocabulary of Urdu, in spite of the centuries of practice to the contrary, they committed a grievous mistake. Today writers of Hindi—some under an utterly mistaken notion of what Indianness consists in, and some moved by frankly communal sentiment,—are inflicting a worse injury upon Hindi by (1) driving out simple, easy and widely understood words of foreign origin, (2) substituting Sanskrit *tatsams* for common *tadbhavas*, (3) employing Sanskritic rules of forming derivatives which are contrary to the genius of Prakritic growth and a burden upon the sound system of Hindi, (4) borrowing all kinds of suitable and unsuitable words exclusively from the treasury of Sanskrit.

The whole truth about Hindi and Urdu is not that Urdu alone had replaced good words in use in Hindi by words of foreign origin, but that modern high Hindi has been built up from Urdu by substituting for words of Persian derivation Sanskritic words. The fact is that compared with high Hindi, Urdu has a hoary past, and the real grievance of speakers of Urdu is that the advocates of Hindi are endeavouring

to oust an old Indian language by a new-fangled one.

It is a gross misrepresentation of facts to say that in moving along these lines Hindi and Urdu are following the lines of natural growth, for we know that these tendencies are being deliberately fostered. In fact the widening of the gulf between Urdu and Hindi is merely an expression in the literary field of the communalism which is so rampant in our social and political life. Notwithstanding protestations to the contrary, propaganda on behalf of a Sanskritized Hindi is not a healthy national movement, for it supports exclusionism. India is a composite country; it has many races, many religions, many cultures, many languages. Indian nationality cannot be the sort of unitary homogeneous society and civilization which obtains in England, France, Italy or Germany. A common Indian *lingua franca* must reflect the composite character of the Indian nation, and therefore all endeavours to make that language the national language of India which rests upon the exclusive basis of one cultural tradition is fraught with strife and destined to fail.

An appreciation of difficulties of this kind led the Indian National Congress to adopt Hindustani as the national language of India. Pandit

Jawaharlal Nehru, perceiving clearly the implications of the situation, asserted: "I have no doubt in my mind that Hindi and Urdu must come nearer to each other, and though they may wear different garbs, will be essentially one language." A desire to put an end to the estrangement between the two communities actuated Mahatma Gandhi recently to say: "I would like to form an association advocating the learning of both forms of speech and both the scripts by its members and carrying on propaganda to that end in the hope finally of a natural fusion of the two becoming a common inter-provincial speech called Hindustani. Then the question would be not Hindustani=Hindi+Urdu, but Hindustani=Hindi=Urdu."

I hope all thoughtful persons will give their earnest attention to the problem, and on my part I fervently wish that the proposal of Mahatma Gandhi may soon be accomplished.













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